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ADMINISTRATIVE PROBLEMS

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Abraham Lincoln's Administrative Problems

Indians

Excerpts from newspapers and other sources

From the files of the
Lincoln Financial Foundation Collection

Butcher, J. J. ...
PRESIDENT LINCOLN AND THE INDIANS.
Father Beeson lectured at Buffalo on Sunday evening last, and his lecture was attended by Mr. Lincoln, the President elect. The Buffalo Commercial says:

The audience was deeply interested. Many eminent persons were present, among whom we noticed Ex-President Fillmore and the President elect, Mr. Lincoln. It shows of what spirit our new President is to be in his high office—that amidst all the seeking for him just now, and amidst all the fatigue of his journey and receptions, he should leave his hotel, and quietly and alone go to hear of the condition and wrongs of the poor friendless Indians. May God help him to do them justice.

2/21/61
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1861 37

Photographs of the original letter
which is in the Minnesota Historical
Society collection.

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Executive Mansion,

Washington. December 6th. 1862.

Brigadier General H. H. Sibley
St. Paul

Minnesota.

Ordered that of the Indians
and Half-breed, sentenced to be hanged by the Military
Commission, composed of Colonel Crooks, Lt. Colonel Marsh,
also, Captain Grant, Captain Bailey, and Lieutenant Clin, and
lately sitting in Minnesota, you caused to be executed on
Friday the nineteenth day of December, instant, the following
names, to-wit

"Je-he-hdo-me-cha."	No 2.	by the record.
"Jagoo" alias "Plan-doo-tai."	No 4.	by the record.
"My-a-tek-to-wah"	No 5	by the record.
"Ho-w-haw-shoon-ko-yag."	No 6	by the record
"Muz-ga-born-a-dw."	No 10.	by the record.
"Wah-pay-dw-tai."	No 11.	by the record
"Ma-he-hna."	No 12.	by the record
"Sna-me-mi."	No 14.	by the record.
"Ja-te-mi-na."	No 15.	by the record.
"Pda-w-gan-kna."	No 19.	by the record.
"Do-wan-pai."	No 23.	by the record.
"Kw-paw."	No 24.	by the record.

"Shoon-kaw-ska" (White Dog).	No 35. by the record.
"Toon-kaw-e-cha-tay-mane."	No 67. by the record.
"E-tay-hoo-tay."	No 68. by the record.
"Am-da-cha."	No 69. by the record.
"Koy-pee-dow-or, Wanne-omne ho-tai"	No 70. by the record.
"Makperi-o-ko-na-ji."	No 96. by the record.
"Henry Miloriv" a Half-breed.	No 115. by the record.
"Charkay-dow" or "Charkay-stay."	No 121. by the record.
"Baptiste Campbell" a Half-breed.	No 138. by the record.
"Jah-taw-kay-gay."	No 155. by the record.
"Koa-pink-pai."	No 170. by the record.
"Hippolite Anzo" a Half-breed.	No 175. by the record.
"Kaw-pay-shuu."	No 178. by the record.
"Ma-kaw-taw-ka."	No 210. by the record.
"Toon-kaw-kaw-gay-e-na-jin."	No 225. by the record.
"Mar-kat-e-na-jin."	No 254. by the record.
"Pa-gee-koo-tay-ma-na."	No 264. by the record.
"Ja-tay-hoo-dow."	No 279. by the record.
"Ma-She-choon" or "Toon-kaw-shkaw-shkaw-mene-kay."	No 318. by the record.
"A-e-cha-gai"	No 327. by the record.
"Kaw-taw-in-koo."	No 333. by the record.
"Chay-tow-hoon-ka."	No 342. by the record.
"Chew-ka-hoo."	No 355. by the record.

"Koder-hin-hoday."

No. 373. by the record.

"O-gar-tey-a-koo."

No. 377. by the record.

"May-hoo-way-wa'."

No. 382. by the record.

"Ma-kun-yow-na'."

No. 383 by the record.

"The other condemned prisoners you will hold sub-
ject to further orders, taking care that they neither
escape, nor, ^{as} subjected to any unlawful violence.

Abraham Lincoln, Pres-
ident of the United States.

On Saturday evening we had the celebrated Mrs. Swenson, who has been for six or eight years past engaged in editing and publishing the St. Cloud Democrat, which, in addition to its racy, spicy contents, has the "honor" of being the most northerly paper published in the country. Mrs. S.'s subject was the late Indian massacre in Minnesota, which occurred in the neighborhood of the place of her residence. She spoke strongly upon the subject, and doubtless expressed the almost unanimous sentiment of the people of Minnesota upon the Indian question. This is that the savages must be expelled the State—that they and the whites cannot longer live in the same vicinago.

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1/20/03

INDIANS USE LINCOLN CANES

ALBUQUERQUE, N. M., Dec. 19.—(AP)—In 1863 President Lincoln gave silver mounted canes to each of thirteen governors of pueblos among the Pueblo and Zuni Indians in New Mexico, on the occasion of their visit to Washington. Today these canes represent the emblem of authority in the pueblos. They have been handed down from governor to governor.

Lincoln's memory, through the canes, still stands as the symbol of authority—the recognition of the Great White Father for his redskin children of New Mexico.

Accounts of the visit of the Pueblo governors to Washington indicate that the president intended the canes only as a personal gift. But the Indian chieftains took them as confirmation of their authority to rule the pueblos. Thus they became scepters of power, and now they are known as "ceremonial canes" and are carried by the governors while performing important duties of office.

A quarter of a century ago a ceremonial cane figured in a controversy between Pueblo Indians of Espanola, N. M., and an Indian service official that nearly led to serious trouble. The white official took away the cane from the pueblo's governor and gave it to the man whom he desired to elevate to the office. The wrath of the Indians was aroused and the government mollified their grievance only by trying the official and giving him a suspended sentence.

The governor of a pueblo is elected at certain periods by the cacique or council of the elders.

INDIANS CALL ON MCKINLEY.

They Were Pueblos and Carried Canes that Lincoln Gave Them.

SPECIAL DISPATCH TO THE GLOBE-DEMOCRAT.
WASHINGTON, D. C., November 18.—Six ancient and queer Indian friends of the United States were permitted to shake hands with the President. They were Pueblo Indians, and live in a town of their own at Isleta, Mex. The Governor of the town, Vicente Jiron, headed the six Pueblos this morning. Three of the six were wise men of the tribe and carried with them walking canes presented to them in 1863 by President Lincoln. The canes are never brought out except on state occasions, and to frighten offenders. Even farther back than the 60s the Pueblos were good friends of Uncle Sam, and aided in suppressing uprisings of other Indians. President Lincoln recognized this friendship by ordering three silver-headed canes to be made for distribution to the three leading Indians of the tribe. The canes were appropriately inscribed. They are held in awe and reverence by the Pueblos, who look upon them as gifts from the "Great, Great White Father."

Lincoln's Cane as a Scepter

By Frederic Benzinger

WITH Abraham Lincoln's cane as the scepter of power for its chief executive, the new government of the Republic of Taos has had its inauguration, and the male population have returned to their mysterious underground *estufas*, while the women spend their days laboriously grinding corn meal to feed their lords and masters. The strange Tewan community is tucked away so securely in the fastnesses of the Rocky Mountains of New Mexico that few Americans have heard of it, though it holds sway over a territory two leagues square, has an independent government, administers its own laws, ignores American statutes and courts and has even dared to wage a disastrous war against Uncle Sam. Much less does the Yankee know of the two wonderful pyramids inhabited by the Taosians, the only pyramids in the United States, hives of mystery, heavy with the antiquity of the ages.

The election was held in the subterranean council chambers, known as *estufas* from the Spanish word meaning stove or hot-house. They are big pits dug in the ground ages ago, and covered over except for an opening three feet square, and they can be located by two barkless poles, the tops of rude ladders, sticking up through the entrance. Chief among the officers are the governor, a lieutenant governor for the other pyramid, an *alcalde* (judge) and a war captain.

The inauguration is a solemn occasion and for "republican simplicity" there is nothing to equal it among the whites. No pomp and little circumstance, mark the great day. There is no parade with blaring bands, no speech full of promises and no grand ball with a mass of heart aches in its train. At the proper time the officials of the republic meet at the little adobe chapel, the incumbents on one side and the newly elected on the other. The retiring governor, dark skinned and wrinkled with age, perhaps blissfully ignorant of all the world beyond the horizon of his pyramid, holds before him the precious cane of Lincoln, and no king ever had profounder respect for his scepter.

Forty years ago an embassy from the Republic of Taos, after weary days spent in crossing the plains, arrived in Washington to insist on its rights under the ancient treaty with Spain, which had been guaranteed by the United States. President Lincoln received the Taosians kindly, confirmed their rights and privileges and sent them home firm friends of Uncle Sam. As a pledge of amity the President of the United States of America sent the Republic of Taos a cane with this inscription:

A. LINCOLN

TAOS,
1863.

Relying on the promise of President Lincoln, the people of Taos, while free to manage their own affairs, hold that the United States exercises a protectorate over them and will guard them against enemies from without. And thus it has come about that the silver-headed ebony stick presented by the martyred President is revered by the strange people of the pyramids as the symbol of authority. They go even further in their respect for the United States, for they call in the probate judge of the county for the inauguration ceremonies as a witness to their regularity, though he has no power to give validity to the proceedings except as the Taosians accept his presence as stamping regularity on the inauguration. They have selected him as the representative of Uncle Sam to give "official recognition" to the new government, though there is absolutely no binding quality in the probate judge's participation.

At an understood signal the two sets of Taos officials form in line with the governors at the head and solemnly march in single file to the altar of the chapel. As the two lines meet, the retiring governor hands

mid and shouts it out to his people. Often there are few in the open to hear what he says, but apparently the information is circulated by those who do hear.

There is some reason for thinking that Taos adopted this republican form of government about the time Plymouth Rock was having itself discovered, but it may have been only a modification of an ancient form of government, for Taos even yet has a *cacique* whose word is law supreme, even above that of the governor. The chief holds office for life, and his authority holds good as to many of the ceremonies and relations of life that have come down from the pagan era of the Tewan race.

If the Republic of Taos once did wage war against the Republic of the United States, let the white American not be too hasty in his judgment of his red brother. Let him hear the story of the mis-named "Taos rebellion" and dare to deny that the people of the pyramids exhibited a fine loyalty to a sacred promise. Whether the Spaniards were cruel to the Pueblos or not is still in dispute, but they at least gave to each of the ancient villages a grant of land and then respected its ownership. By such a treaty the Taosians were confirmed in their ownership of two leagues square of the best watered valley in all New Mexico.

In the old days, before Uncle Sam's blue soldiers had driven the Utes, the Apaches and the Navajos to reservations, the peaceful Taosians were harassed by the roving Indians. That was the reason why they built up their adobe community houses in the form of many-storied and many-roomed pyramids. They didn't exactly go into their holes and pull the holes in after them, but they entered their homes through doors in the roof, after mounting to the roof on a ladder and pulling the ladder up after them. Taos was also a walled city, remnants of the adobe inclosure being still in evidence.

But the plains Indians were troublesome in spite of these defenses, and the Taosians entered into an alliance with some Mexicans who had wandered up from the south. They gave the Mexicans a corner of their territory, and the two communities entered into a sacred compact for mutual protection.

After the Americans had captured Santa Fe the Mexicans planned an uprising to drive the hated Gringos from the country. The white allies of Taos called on the peace-loving pyramid people to redeem their pledge, and the Taosians promptly declared war against the United States. All the Americans in the Taos valley and several Mexican sympathizers, fifteen in all, were killed. The little Army of Resistance then started for Santa Fe, but was met by American troops midway and defeated. The Mexicans scattered to their homes and professed a profound ignorance of passing events. The simple Taosians fled to their church, to the sanctuary of San Geronimo (Saint Jerome) and besought from him the protection which their white padre had so often promised them. The Americans bombarded the church and set it afire, and the Taosians were severely punished, though many of them succeeded in making their escape to the mountains.

When some of the leaders of the uprising were condemned to death on the charge of "treason," the President of the United States saved Americans from that shame by ruling that they were not "rebels," but citizens of Mexico patriotically defending their native country from an invader. The Republic of Taos has ever since been at peace with the Republic of the United States, which has left the pyramid people free to manage its own affairs.



PUEBLO OF TAOS ON A FEST DAY



A GOVERNOR OF TAOS



"LOOKING PLEASANT"



JUAN AND HIS NIÑOS



TAOS GIRL IN FESTIVAL ARRAY

CARRIES THE LINCOLN C



Lorenzo Lucero, chief of all the Pueblo tribe at Sandia, N. M., recently went to Washington to call on the president and see the sights. The cane he carries was given in 1863 by Abraham Lincoln to the then chief of the tribe and has been handed down as an emblem of chieftainship.

1915

HAS CANE MADE BY LINCOLN

Kansas City Man Keeps Memento
Among the Most Precious of
His Possessions.

1914



IRA HAWORTH of Kansas City has a cane and a gavel that were given to him in 1860 by Abraham Lincoln. They are made of the wood of a black walnut tree which was cut down by Lincoln himself. Around the top of the cane is a band of German silver, upon which is engraved: "To Ira Haworth from Abraham Lincoln, 1860."

The cane was whittled out by Lincoln.

"Yes, Old Abe gave them to me," said Mr. Haworth as he drew the relics from a tin case in which he keeps them. "He gave them to me when I was chairman of the town committee in his home county. I used them during the campaign of 1860. When he gave them to me he said:

"This gavel is to keep order. The cane is to use when you get old. I know you will live old because the good die young."

"When Lincoln came back from congress he said to me:

"They're too smart for me up there, I don't feel at home."

"Lincoln and Douglas traveled the state in a buggy together. Both spoke at Paris, Ill., one day and I heard them. I remember it well. Douglas had then been talked of as a candidate for president, Lincoln had not. Douglas was a small man and he wore one of those long linen dusters, then in fashion; the duster touched his shoe tops. When Lincoln arose to speak it was hot and dusty and everybody was tired.

"You have heard people talk of Douglas for president," he said. "He will never be president, however, and I'll tell you why. The people of the United States will never elect a man president who wears a linen duster that trails the ground. His coat tail is too long."

"This caused a great laugh and put every one in a good humor."

Carries Token of Friendship



Photograph by Cross

An Indian Governor With One of the Ceremonial Canes Which Abraham Lincoln Gave to the Ruler of Each Pueblo as a Mark of Esteem From the Government to the Indians.

Zuni Indians Regain Ceremonial Canes

Gifts of a King of Spain and Abraham Lincoln Held in Great Veneration

SANTA FE, N. M., Feb. 9 (Special Correspondence)—Zuni, one of the largest Indian pueblos in New Mexico, recently celebrated the return of the seven ceremonial canes to her governor and councilmen. Two years ago the ceremonial canes mysteriously disappeared.

To the Zunis this was a matter of great moment for two of these canes had been given to the chief by the King of Spain in the ancient days and another had been presented to the cacique of each pueblo in New Mexico by Abraham Lincoln, when the "Great White Father" had called a meeting of all the Indian governors in Washington and presented each one with a cane as a token of the enduring friendship of the Government to the Indians.

The Lincoln cane was of ebony with a round silver head upon which was engraved, "To the Governor of the Pueblo of Zuni, from his friend, A. Lincoln, President of the United States of America, Washington, 1862."

These canes have been handed down from one generation to the next with much ceremony and veneration, the Lincoln cane being held as the symbol of office by the governor of each pueblo during his term and considered his most valued possession.

Lawyers representing the American Defense Society and H. J. Hagerman, commissioner to the Navajos, have succeeded in restoring the seven canes and silver badges and harmony has been re-established in the council. A great ceremonial dance celebrated the restoring of the canes.

M 3327

LINCOLN SUNDAY

February 14, 1932



Lincoln
and the
Indians

THE AMERICAN MISSIONARY ASSOCIATION
287 Fourth Avenue, New York, N. Y.

Lincoln and the Indians

GEORGE W. HINMAN

*Display National Flag—Give salute and sing America.
Responses may be given by the school in unison or
made by individual classes..*

Superintendent—Once again we remember the birthday of Abraham Lincoln and recall his concern for the oppressed and unprivileged races in the United States.

At the same time we remember the work of The American Missionary Association which conducts schools and churches for Negroes and Indians in the spirit of Lincoln. As our Sunday School shares in the work of the Association we want to know more about what we together are doing on the Indian field.

Use responsive service or have the Story Teller give the story.

Supt.—Who were the first missionaries among the Dakota Indians?

Pupils—Samuel and Gideon Pond, Congregationalists from Connecticut, who went as volunteer missionaries to the Sioux at Fort Snelling in 1844.

Supt.—What was their first work among the Indians?

Pupils—Teaching them to plow and raise corn, so repaying the debt of our Pilgrim Fathers to the Massachusetts Indians who gave them Indian corn in those first hard years of their settlement at Plymouth.

Supt.—When did our mission boards begin work for the Dakota Indians?

Pupils—The American Board sent Stephen Riggs and Dr. John Williamson just a few months after the Ponds began their work.

Supt.—When did the Dakota Indians in large numbers turn from their pagan religion to Christianity?

Pupils—Only after the Minnesota Massacre in 1862, when four hundred Indians were imprisoned in the Federal Prison at Mankato, Minn., and condemned to death for their part in the attack on white settlers.

Supt.—What did our missionaries do for the Indians during the many months they were in prison under sentence of death?

Pupils—Dr. Riggs, Dr. Williamson and Mr. Gideon Pond spent many days in the prison, preaching and praying with them, taking messages to their families and supplying them with gospels and hymn books. After a few months, on one memorable Sunday, more than three hundred of these Indian prisoners were baptized and organized into a church, with elders and deacons, who later became preachers of the Indian churches scattered through many communities on the new reservations to which the tribe was moved.

Supt.—What did President Lincoln do for the Dakota Indian prisoners?

Pupils—In the dark year of 1862, the second year of the Civil War, when the future of the Union was very uncertain and Lincoln was pondering the question of the emancipation of the slaves as a war measure, he took his valuable time to study the reports of the military trials of the four hundred Dakota Indians accused of sharing in the Minnesota Massacre.

Supt.—And what was his decision?

Pupils—After going over all the evidence he decided that only thirty-eight Indians, positively known to have engaged in actual massacres, should be hung, granting life to three hundred and sixty-two who had been condemned to death by the military courts.

Supt.—What did Lincoln say about the Indians in a message to Congress?

Pupils—He advocated a revision of the whole government in Indian service. He resisted the appeals for drastic action against the Indians, objecting to a "severity which would be real cruelty."

Supt.—What was one of Lincoln's famous statements, which he applied to Indians in the same spirit as to those of his own race?

Pupils—"With malice toward none and charity for all."

Supt.—It is this spirit which controls the work of our American Missionary Association for people of all races, Negroes, Indians, American Highlanders, Orientals, Spanish Americans and Puerto Ricans. Our offering to-day should be in this spirit and will be used for the work of the association.

Santee Normal Training School, Santee, Neb., a standard boarding school of high-school grade, and one of the best schools for Indians in the United States. It was founded by the son of Stephen Riggs, the missionary who taught the Indians in the Mankato prison and organized the first church in the prison. His grandson is the present principal.

Fort Berthold Mission, Elbowoods, N. D., is under the care of the Association. It includes the churches on the reservation and a small elementary school which "teaches the necessity of healthy minds in healthy bodies to make worth while a good education."

Our missionary money helps the Association in all its work for the different races; so we share in making ourselves and these others *Better Americans* for a *Better America*.

Offering taken to desk by representative of classes.

Prayer.

Closing Hymn—O Beautiful for Spacious Skies.

RARE CANES OF LINCOLN

**Walking Sticks Given to
Pueblo Governors by
The Emancipator**
By RUTH LAUGHLIN.

SANTA FE.
PRESIDENTS come and go, but Abraham Lincoln still lives in the community life of the Pueblo Indians of New Mexico. Canes presented by Lincoln to the governors of each pueblo are their official insignia.

The canes are of ebony with a plain silver knob at the top. On the silver band is inscribed "To the Governor of the pueblo of San Juan, New Mexico, from his friend, A. Lincoln, President of the United States of America, Washington, 1862."

At that time Lincoln had to deal with the Indian problem in the West as well as the slave problem in the South. Marauding Apaches and Navajos were attacking caravans on the Santa Fe Trail and swooping down on frontier American settlements to carry off children, women and horses.

The only peaceable Indians were those living along the Rio Grande drainage in pueblos or towns. As a reward for being trustworthy the governors of these twenty New Mexico pueblos were sent to Washington, entertained by the Great White Father and presented with silver mounted canes.

Old Custom Continued.

President Lincoln's gift perpetuated an old custom. Man's symbol of official power has always been a sceptre or cane. The caciques had always had an Indian cane. Lincoln presented another as a symbol of American authority vested in the peaceful Pueblos.

These canes are the Indians' proudest possessions. The governors keep them in their houses and guard them carefully. A few years ago civil strife broke out at Zuni because an opposing faction had stolen the canes.

The governors are elected for one-year terms. This year Pueblo women also have been given the right to vote. The number of voters varies from small pueblos of fewer than 100 to Laguna with a population of over 1,500.

The Indians owned their lands and homes in common long before the first Europeans saw the Rocky Mountains. Each pueblo is a self-governing unit and is only held responsible to the Federal court for eight major crimes such as murder, arson, &c. Though the Indians choose to remain wards of the government they are keenly interested in the policies of the Indian Bureau

Three or four times a year representatives of the twenty pueblos meet at Santo Domingo for the All-Pueblo Council. The governors present their credentials by carrying their canes—the Indian cane and the one given by Lincoln seventy-four years ago.

The All-Pueblo Council.

The United States Senate could take lessons in dignified procedure from the All-Pueblo Council. The minority opinion is heard with respectful attention, for the majority rules and there is calm acceptance of the decision. But the Pueblo governors like to orate. In that respect they resemble politicians.

Most of the members are conservatives, but there is also the progressive bloc. These are young men who have returned from government schools with modern ideas. The age-youth battle always keeps the meetings lively.

Most of the members still wear striped blankets, moccasins and long braids of black hair falling over each shoulder.

A young member of the house committee looks after the cigarettes which have taken the place of the peace pipe. A calico pouch of strong tobacco passes from hand to hand. From the folds of blankets the governors produce cigarette papers in the form of dried corn husks dexterously cut with the fingernail into the right length. The cigarette is quickly rolled by long, brown fingers. The house committee passes a light—a dried sunflower stalk, the end of which glows like a punk stick.

John Collier, the Indian Commissioner, often sits in at the All-Pueblo Council to explain the technical phraseology of white lawmakers. The Indians like his zealous interest in their problems.

Proceedings Translated.

All proceedings of the council are translated from English into Spanish and then into two Indian languages. The translations are not made sentence by sentence, but by giving the gist of the whole speech at once. Consequently, one translator may be terse, touching only the high points, while another may give a wordy, individual comment on the text.

Translating speeches is now more a matter of tradition than of necessity. Many Indians read newspapers, magazines and the Congressional Record. Their longest discussions are over New Deal policies which affect their community life.

They have voted for the Wheeler-Howard bill, which provides for more self-government and fewer orders from Washington. They are pleased with the new day schools for each pueblo, so that their children may remain at home instead of being sent to distant government boarding schools at 6 years of age. Their agricultural life is now assured by the lands and money given in the past two years by the government to take the place of land lost to them by the encroach-



Carrying a Lincoln Cane as His
Staff of Office.

1936

Lincoln Awed Little Indian

From Blackhawk War in Wisconsin Comes New Saga of 'Abe'

Journal Special Correspondence

Lancaster, Wis.—This is the time of year when Lincoln stories pop up like mushrooms after a rain. But stories of Lincoln in Wisconsin are hard to come by. This vignette bears telling both because it is factually true and because it has lain buried for more than three score years between the pages of a little known history of Grant county and the lead mining region.

It was during the Blackhawk wars when "a small force of Indians created a great deal of panic," according to the historian. Two thousand Illinois militiamen were among those attempting to quell the uprising. Several companies of volunteers were recruited from among the lead miners. R. H. Magoon, a colorful figure of those days and a pioneer in smelting and merchandising in southwestern Wisconsin, was a lieutenant in a company of mounted volunteers under Capt. John G. Clark of Lancaster.

Halted Near Whitewater

Magoon's company along with other troops under Col. Dodge arrived at the rapids near Whitewater, below Horicon lake, in the spring. They crossed to the east bank and called a halt in a grove of sugar trees with a thick undergrowth of red raspberry bushes.

Riding along the border of this patch, Lieut. Magoon glimpsed a curious sight through an opening in the trees. He reined in his horse to watch. A dwarfish Indian was walking slowly 'round and 'round a

very tall, very lean white man. Oblivious of the Indian, the tall man appeared to be immersed in his own thoughts. Finally he became aware of the scrutiny.

He watched the Indian for a moment, a somewhat puzzled look on his face. Then his eyes went to the amused Magoon, sitting immobile on his horse.

"Taking Your Altitude"

"I wonder what the little Indian wants?" he said to the officer. Magoon appeared to give the matter deep thought.

"It is my opinion," he pronounced gravely at last, "that he was taking your altitude."

The eyes of the tall militiaman twinkled and both men burst out laughing as the officer added, "In fact, I'm sure of it. Notice how he cocked up his eye every time he made a turn!"

The two men shook hands, the tall man introducing himself as Abraham Lincoln of Springfield, Ill. It was the beginning of an acquaintance that endured for some time. Magoon and Lincoln never met without getting a laugh out of the little "cockeyed" Indian, the historian said.

2-13-44

LINCOLN LORE

Bulletin of the Lincoln National Foundation - - - - - Dr. Louis A. Warren, Editor
Published each week by The Lincoln National Life Insurance Company, Fort Wayne, Indiana

Number 1262

FORT WAYNE, INDIANA

June 15, 1953

THE COMANCHE CHIEFS VISIT LINCOLN

A series of coincidences relating to time element, similarity of names and illustrative Lincolniana is largely responsible for this monograph. There came in the editor's mail on almost the same day, a detailed report of the tornado which had devastated the community where he grew up in Massachusetts, and an 1876 copy of *St. Nicholas* giving an account of a visit the Comanche Indian chiefs paid to Abraham Lincoln at the White House. The name Comanche was immediately associated with the great tornado bearing that name which swept through the Iowa and Illinois country nearly a hundred years ago and left in the wake a casualty list as large as the Michigan and Massachusetts tragedies.

Thinking of the Comanche tornado recalled a reminiscence of Hesler, the Chicago photographer who went to Springfield, Ill. to make some pictures of Abraham Lincoln, then a recently nominated candidate for the Presidency. Hesler told Herbert Wells Fay that he remembered distinctly the date the photographs were taken, June 3, 1860, because it was on the day of the great Comanche tornado. Recalling the Hesler photographs there immediately came to mind a rare engraving in the Foundation collection created by Fred Dellanoy, published in Paris and bearing the title "Lincoln Recevant Les Indiens Comanches." The hand colored picture presents Lincoln addressing a group of Indian chiefs, some of them, if not all, Comanches and in their full regalia. The fact that the incident was significant enough, from the French viewpoint, to have it memorialized by a print, implies some special interest which the French had in this tribe. The Comanches were first discovered by the French in Colorado and in 1724 at which time they made a treaty with them. Later, the Indians sifted down into Texas where a reservation was set apart for them in 1847. Later on we find them in Oklahoma. The maximum population of the tribe was about 25,000 but by the time of the establishing of the Texas reservation it had dwindled to 10,000.

With the visit of the Indian chiefs strikingly visualized by the engraving before us, we return to the *St. Nicholas* article which presents the reminiscences of Albert Rhodes, a contemporary diplomat and writer who was present when Lincoln received the red skins and recorded the remarks of Lincoln upon addressing the tribesmen. Rhodes recalled that there were about 20 Indians in the delegation and their interpreter had them seated in the form of a crescent on the floor of the spacious east room. The fact that they were dressed in the full regalia of the Indian chiefs made a colorful occasion. A number of prominent people had been invited to witness the interview with the President.

Upon Lincoln's arrival in the room the chiefs were personally presented to the President who shook hands with each one. The preliminary ceremonies over, the addresses of the Indians began under somewhat embarrassing circumstances as the first chief forgot his speech. The interpreter said to the President: "White Bear asks for time to collect his thoughts," and finally he was able to proceed with his address.

Their speeches all sounded the same note of loyalty to the country but stressed the fact that their people were needy and required assistance. Big Wolf particularly

emphasized the great desire they entertained to be "prosperous and rich like their white brothers." He also stated that they wanted horses and carriages and a fine wigwam "like this", he added, as he pointed to the elegant furnishings of the East Room. He also wished they might have sausages like they ate at the Washington hotel which brought a broad smile from the President. It is understood that Big Wolf became a casualty on account of too much sausage. The real orator of the delegation was Red Fox and to convince his people he had actually seen the Great Father he wanted to return laden down with presents—"shining all over like a looking glass."

After the Indians were through the interpreter said, "Mr. President, the chiefs would be glad to have you talk." Lincoln opened his remarks with these words:

"My red brethern are anxious to be prosperous and have horses and carriages like the pale faces. I propose to tell them how they may get them." Lincoln then went on to suggest the necessary steps to satisfy their desires. He said:

"The plan is a simple one. You all have land. We will furnish you with agricultural implements, with which you will turn up the soil, by hand if you have not the means to buy an ox, but I think with the aid which you receive from the Government, you might at least purchase one ox to do the plowing for several. You will plant corn, wheat, and potatoes, and with the money for which you will sell these you will be able to each buy an ox for himself at the end of the first year. At the end of the second year, you will each be able to buy perhaps two oxen and some sheep and pigs. At the end of the third, you will probably be in a condition to buy a horse, and in the course of a few years you will thus be the possessor of horses and carriages like ourselves.

"I do not know any other way to get these things. It is the plan we have pursued—at least those of us who have them. You cannot pick them off the trees, and they do not fall from the clouds."

This part of Lincoln's speech is but the restating of his capitalistic philosophy and it almost parallels in essence a paragraph in his annual message to Congress on Dec. 3, 1861 in which he states:

"Many independent men everywhere in these States, a few years back in their lives, were hired laborers. The prudent, penniless beginner in the world, labors for wages awhile, saves a surplus with which to buy tools or land for himself; then labors on his own account another while, and at length hires another new beginner to help him. This is the just, and generous, and prosperous system, which opens the way to all—gives hope to all, and consequent energy, and progress, and improvement of condition to all."

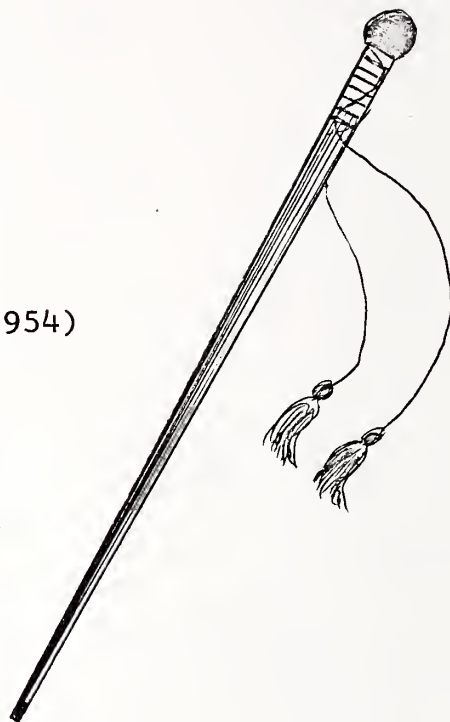
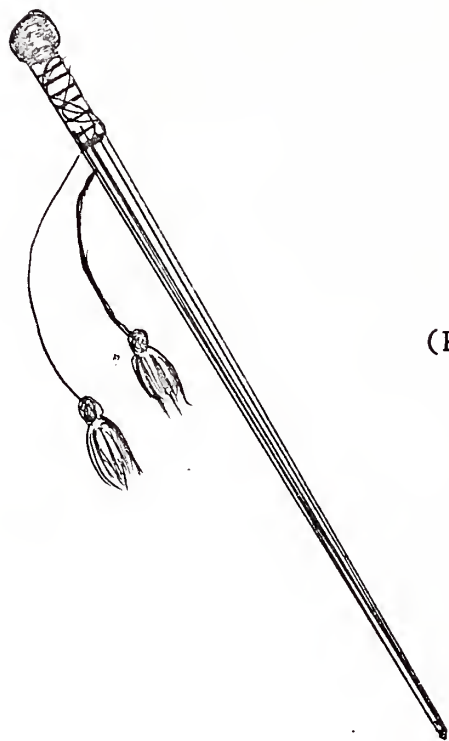
Some statements which the President used in conclusion with respect to the extent of the world in which we live and transportation facilities which were enjoyed, are too fragmentary to present. It is to be regretted that more of the Indians did not follow the advice of Lincoln as the rich oil deposits of their country would have allowed them to have all the fine things they desired, even wigwams that rivaled the east room of the White House and plenty of sausage.

PUEBLO GOVERNORS' CANES

BY

Chester E. Faris

April, 1952
(Revised September 1954)



SOUTHERN PUEBLOS AGENCY
P. O. Box 1667
Albuquerque, N. M. 87103

PUEBLO GOVERNORS' CANES

Eighty years after Coronado wintered with the Pueblos on the Río Grande in 1540, the Military and Church had little understanding of the peaceful Pueblo organization and government. The Pueblo leaders were silent people.

The first recorded assembly of the Pueblo leaders was on July 7, 1598, at Santo Domingo with Oñate, the early Spanish Explorer. He moved on to San Juan for temporary location, allowing his study of the Pueblos. After a short decade it was thought advisable to move the administration headquarters toward a more central location. In line with the Spanish pattern of assigning to each Pueblo a Land Grant approximately twenty-five square miles, Oñate selected his capital site on the little mountain stream claiming therefore the like acreage for Santa Fé.

The King of Spain in 1620 therefore issued a Royal Decree requiring each Pueblo with the close of the calendar year to choose by popular vote a governor, a lieutenant governor, and such other officers as could be needed to carry on the Pueblo affairs. This they should do without interference of Church or Crown. Within the week of the calendar year ending they should have their election, and within the first week of the new year they should have their inauguration with such ceremonies as desired. A silver-headed vara or cane was given to each Pueblo for the governor as symbol of his commission and authority to be passed on to succeeding governors. A cross was inscribed on the silver mount as evidence of the support of the Church.

The good Franciscan Fathers following the Good Book of Moses impressed upon the Indians the lessons of leadership in Exodus Four and Numbers Seventeen. The rod and staff should be their comfort and strength, and their token against all enemies.

There is no record of the elections and the canes during the Pueblo Rebellion from 1680 to about 1692. In 1696 the majority of the Pueblos were reconciled to the reconquest. De Vargas was successful in his recognition of leadership. It was said the leaders often appeared with the official cane as the one salvaged symbol of Spanish supremacy yet tied to the native thinking. Their elections were resumed, if in truth they were every neglected, and for one hundred and twenty-five years the annual elections and ceremonial inaugurations saw the several canes handed on to succeeding governors.

The first reference made to the canes of the Pueblos in our national history was by Zebulon M. Pike. With his party of fifteen men, coming down the Río Grande they had visited San Juan, Pojoaque, Tesuque, and Santa Fé. They reached Santo Domingo March 5, 1807, which according to his journal was "then a village of about one

thousand natives". They had a chief (or governor) "who was distinguished by a cane with a silver head and a black tassel". The governors at that time had but the one Spanish cane, with the cross inscribed on the silver head.

When Mexico won independence from Spain, sovereignty was successfully established and new staffs, silver thimbled, were presented to the several Pueblos. They were again authorized and commissioned to function in line with their long custom, having two canes each in symbolic support.

A short generation later an Army led by General Kearny entered New Mexico. Santa Fé fell. On September third, he crossed Galisteo and approached Santo Domingo. He was met by the Pueblos in striking challenge, all of which Major W. H. Emory recorded in his Military Reconnaissance as follows:

" . . we met ten or fifteen sachemic looking old Indians, well mounted, and two of them carrying gold-headed canes with tassels, the emblems of office in New Mexico.

'Salutations over, we jogged along, and, in the course of conversation, the alcalde, a grave and majestic old Indian said, as if casually. "We shall meet some Indians presently, mounted, and dressed for war, but they are the young men of my town, friends come to receive you, and I wish you to caution your men not to fire upon them when they ride towards them."

'When within a few miles of the town, we saw a cloud of dust rapidly advancing, and soon the air was rent with a terrible yell, resembling the Florida war-whoop. The first object that caught my eye through the column of dust, was a fierce pair of buffalo horns, overlapped with long shaggy hair. As they approached, the sturdy form of a naked Indian revealed itself beneath the horns, with shield and lance, dashing at full speed, on a white horse, which, like his own body, was painted all the colors of the rainbow and then, one by one, his followers came on, painted to the eyes, their own heads and their horses covered with all the strange equipments that the brute creation could afford in the way of horns, skulls, tails, feathers, and claws.

'We were escorted first to the padre's -- where we were shown into his reverence's parlor, tapestried with curtains stamped with the likenesses of all the Presidents of the United States up to this time. The cushions were of spotless damask, and the couch covered with a white Navajo blanket worked in richly colored flowers."

[Note error -- canes
carried silver rather than
gold heads.

General Kearny spoke to the Pueblo people advising them again that he had come for Peace. They heard this with evident satisfaction. Neither Kearney nor Emory could foresee that fifteen years later there would be no Peace in the Nation or in New Mexico. The South with her nine million fought the North with her twenty million very largely on the border states where their two million paid the penalty of location. The Territory of New Mexico like Maryland, Kentucky, Tennessee, Missouri, and Kansas were occupied territory, first by one side and then the other. New Mexico was under military occupation for about two years after General Lee's surrender but, strangely and luckily, the Civil War had little terror for the Pueblos. The Navajo and Apache suffered of war fever and the Utes barely escaped it, but the Pueblos manifested definite immunity.

There could be no wonder that President Lincoln could be impressed by their peaceful attitude. It was to the credit of the Territorial Indian Service and the then Superintendent, Dr. Michael Steck of Pennsylvania, that the Utes and the several Pueblos were Indians apart in the Civil War. In October, John Nicolay, Secretary to the President, was commissioned to meet with the Utes at Conejos in the Upper Rio Grande Valley near the New Mexico territorial line. Dr. Steck met with them taking some leading Utes of the territory. In the week long conference a treaty was prepared and the Ute leaders in agreement were given Peace medals from the President. Nicolay was not able to meet with the Pueblos.

A month later, in early November, 1863, Dr. Steck was called to Washington, ostensibly for Senate confirmation. While he was there President Lincoln decided on the belated recognition of the peaceful Pueblos. It had been seventeen years since General Kearny had taken over the Territory. Presidents Polk, Taylor, Fillmore, Pierce and Buchanan in turn had failed to give any special recognition to the New Mexico Territorial groups. President Lincoln resolved to give the peace-loving Pueblos a symbol after the lesson in the Good Book, Numbers, seventeenth chapter. Secretary Nicolay and Dr. Steck were in full accord. The President ordered ebony canes, silver crowned, one for each extant Pueblo on which would be inscribed the name of the Pueblo to which it was intended, the year, "1863", and his name, "A. Lincoln, Pres. U.S.A." Nineteen canes were purchased from John Dold in Philadelphia to be sent to the several Pueblos as symbols of the new sovereignty, extending continuing authority and commission for their popular form of government so long satisfactory in serving their administrative needs.

Dr. Michael Steck was confirmed as Superintendent of Indian Affairs of the Territory by the unanimous vote of the Senate on January 22, 1864. On the following day he wrote his Deputy, Dr. Baker in Santa Fe, that he would soon leave Washington for the Territory bringing with him several of the Pueblo land patents as were ready, and an official staff for each of the Pueblo governors of the Territory, to be used by them and passed on to their successors after the custom of the Spanish canes.

The Santa Fe New Mexican under date of May 27, 1864, in brief editorial comment announced the return of Dr. Steck bringing with him from the States the official varas for each of the Pueblo governors which carried the name of the President. The staffs were given as the recognized commission to office.

In 1884 the Picuris Pueblo lost the silver mount and brought their cane for a replacement to the agent, Pedro Sanchez, at Santa Fe. The replacement was heavier mounted with floral panels but unfortunately carried an error in date -- "1862" was inscribed instead of "1863".

Some years ago one of the Pueblos very unfortunately lost its Lincoln cane. An unusual uneasiness resulted and the Government in Washington sent a new cane but that promised no satisfaction. They retained the substitute cane until thorough search recovered the Lincoln cane. The substitute was returned with due action and haste.

To this day any interested visitor can see these symbols of office by courteously called at the home of the governor of any one of the several Pueblos. These officials serve their people without salary or compensation except now and then they may be given assistance in care of their crops or stock when duty calls them away. Truly the Pueblos have reason to be proud and appreciative of their heritage. Their government procedure is perhaps the most enduring local government on the face of the earth, next to family, clan, and patriarchal group. Some five thousand elections and inaugurations have been held.

Strangely, the Indians whether hunter, farmer, or fisherman, have a deep conviction in holding to their manners and customs. The Franciscan Fathers gave a religious accent to the canes, which has added to their significance through the years. The Spanish and Lincoln canes are always in evidence at any significant ceremony or gathering of the Pueblos in any season of the year. It is noted that some of the Pueblos have handed their Mexican canes over to the lieutenant governrs. One or more have lost their Mexican canes and acknowledge having only two today. Their respect for the canes is no less in its meaning than is the Congressman's respect for the mace in the House of Representatives. It is certainly a commendation to the Pueblo people that they have so well cared for the symbols of authority, the Spanish canes exceeding three hundred years and the Lincoln canes ninety years in use.

The Pueblos link ceremonies, deities, duties, ideals, rituals, rewards and punishment in their chain of life. This calls for due consideration and understanding to insure alteration without breaking the long enduring chain. Their governments have survived for three or four centuries despite the fact that there is now and long has been clashing between the progressive group and the conservatives. Any integration of their ceremonial, economic, religious

and social life necessitates changing only a link at a time that the more may be salvaged that will strengthen Pueblo, State, and National government. There is need for preserving as much of their heritage as merits assimilation.

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SPA 11/1969

Pueblo Governor

BY E. P. HADDON
AND MARY BRANHAM

NEW MEXICO is in the extraordinary position of having not one governor as most states do, but twenty. Many of us have at least a vague idea about the duties of the governor who lives in the new executive mansion in Santa Fe, but we are a bit hazy about the government and the governors of the nineteen Indian pueblos which the map shows scattered across the face of New Mexico.

In the same year that the Pilgrims stepped ashore on Plymouth Rock the King of Spain issued a Royal Decree requiring each pueblo to choose a governor, lieutenant governor and other officials at the end of the calendar year and to have an inauguration and any other ceremonies they desired during the first week of the new year. The Indians accepted the "Day of the Three Kings" as their inauguration day and since then pueblo inaugurations, with their accompanying dances and ceremonies, have taken place on January 6. A silver-headed cane was given to each Pueblo for the governor as a symbol of his commission and authority to be passed on to succeeding governors. The Franciscan *padres* tried to impress upon the Indian leaders the lessons of leadership set down in Exodus Four and Numbers Seventeen, and on the head of each cane was a cross as evidence of the support of the Church.

When Mexico won her independence from Spain new canes with silver heads were presented to the pueblos. Some of the villages have established the custom of giving the Mexican canes to their lieutenant governors.

President Lincoln felt that the peace loving pueblos should be honored and so had nineteen ebony canes with silver heads inscribed with each pueblo name and "1863—A. Lincoln, Pres. U. S. A."

One of the outstanding pueblo executives is Juan Chavarria, governor of Santa Clara, who for the fifth time has accepted the honor and responsibility that go with the historic canes. Like all pueblo governors he is on call for personal or village problems twenty-four hours a day and it is almost as common for someone to knock on his door at two o'clock in the morning as at two o'clock in the afternoon.

When the *Conquistadores* came into New Mexico they found a highly developed civilization with elaborate

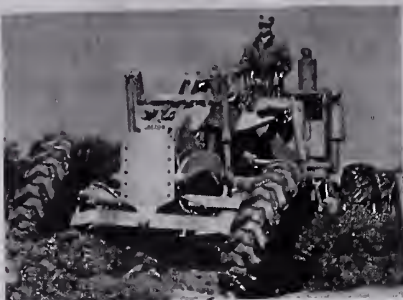


Playing bit parts in movies is one of the Governor's chores. This scene was made for a Tourist Bureau movie, soon to be released, depicting the coming together of Pueblo Indian and Spanish conquistador (played by José Ramon Ortega.)

irrigation systems, so it is evident that the Pueblo Indians of New Mexico have long appreciated the value of irrigation in an arid land. Keeping the irrigation ditches cleaned and repaired and regulating the water is a community project and is supervised by the governor and his council. Santa Clara owns a pueblo tractor which is operated by the governor, so farmers make an appointment when they want their land plowed and Governor Chavarria comes around with the tractor and plows it for them.

As with any executive, in addition to the expected tasks, unexpected duties are constantly arising. We were driving through the pueblo with Governor Chavarria when we discovered

(Continued on Page 42)

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**Pueblo Governor**

(Continued from Page 18)

a pick-up stalled in the middle of Santa Clara Creek. It was driven by a woman who was in a great hurry to get a load of children to school. The governor told her to be patient and he would get the tractor. To the great delight of the children he pulled the pick-up out of the mud without difficulty, and we saw another unexpected job performed by a busy governor.

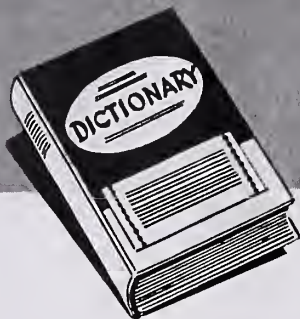
The pueblo tractor is also used to keep the road to Puyé Ruins in repair. The ruins are twelve miles west of the pueblo and are the ancestral home of the Santa Clara people. An Indian caretaker lives at Puyé and keeps paths and ladders in good repair, issues permits for visitors, answers questions concerning its history. In 1957 the first Puyé Ceremonial was held on the weekend following Santa Clara's annual feast of August 12. The Ceremonial was such a huge success that it has become an annual event. There are pottery displays, guided tours of the ruins, and of course, spectacular dances. For his efforts in starting the Puyé Ceremonials the Espanola Valley Chamber of Commerce elected Governor Juan Chavarria the Espanola

Valley Man of the Year for 1957.

Pueblo governors are striving to preserve the best dances and traditions of their people and one of their tasks is to help youngsters learn the intricate steps and rhythms of ceremonial dances. Governor Chavarria uses a tape recorder to help the children of his pueblo learn chants and songs. He has taken several groups of young dancers to Albuquerque to dance on TV shows. This is not really a duty for it is as much fun for the governor as it is for the children.

Meeting with the council regularly is an important duty of a pueblo executive. Governor Chavarria has found that it is most satisfactory to meet with his council once a week. The Santa Clara Council is composed of fourteen members; six are elected and the others appointed. The councilmen serve terms of one year, but they may succeed themselves.

On a visit to Santa Clara the day before a Corn Dance we found Governor Chavarria and a group of men busily sweeping the pueblo in preparation for the dance. At the same time his wife and the other wives of the village were baking bread in outdoor ovens. Before each Feast Day or dance the pueblo must be swept and



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so each governor has this duty on his varied list.

Recently Juan Chavarria found himself faced with a task he had not anticipated. He is featured in a new Tourist Bureau film in a sequence which depicts the coming together of the pueblo Indian and the Spanish *Conquistador*. For his part in the movie he was clad in handsome white buckskin and carried a colorful buffalo hide shield which has been in his family for nearly four hundred years. Actually, the governor is not the only movie actor in his family for his wife and one of his sons were in the crowd of spectators cheering at the bull ring in "Cowboy," the new cinemascope western which was filmed in part at the neighboring pueblo of San Ildefonso.

Governor Chavarria is also a baseball fan and, like other pueblo chief executives, a staunch supporter of his team in the All-Indian league.

Santa Clara now comprises about 59,000 acres. As is true of all pueblos, much of this land is grant from the Spanish Crown, ratified by Mexico and later confirmed by the United States Congress. New Mexico pueblo Indians differ from all other Indians in the U. S. in that they own their land by virtue of titles antedating American occupation. Additions to the original pueblo grants have been made from time to time by purchase and by Executive Order.

Because the pueblos vary in size and are widely scattered their governors must necessarily have duties which vary according to custom and community problems; however, all of them have many similar duties and all of them work together for the common good of the pueblos.

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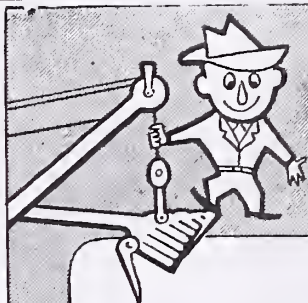
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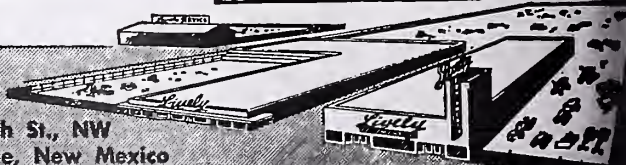
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SPECIAL SIOUX WAR ISSUE



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THE COVER

• This portrait of Little Crow was taken by A. Z. Shindler in Washington, D.C., during the chief's visit to the capital in 1858. From August, 1862, until his death almost a year later, Little Crow symbolized the fury, cunning, and cruelty of the Sioux in the minds of frontier settlers. Ironically, he had for years been regarded as a friend of the whites, and it was with reluctance that he agreed to lead his warriors in the great uprising whose outcome he accurately predicted in the speech which appears on page 115.

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MR. BABCOCK was on the staff of the *Minnesota Historical Society* from 1918 to 1960. He is the author of numerous articles which have appeared in this magazine and in the *Gopher Historian*.



Minnesota's INDIAN WAR

WILLOUGHBY M. BABCOCK

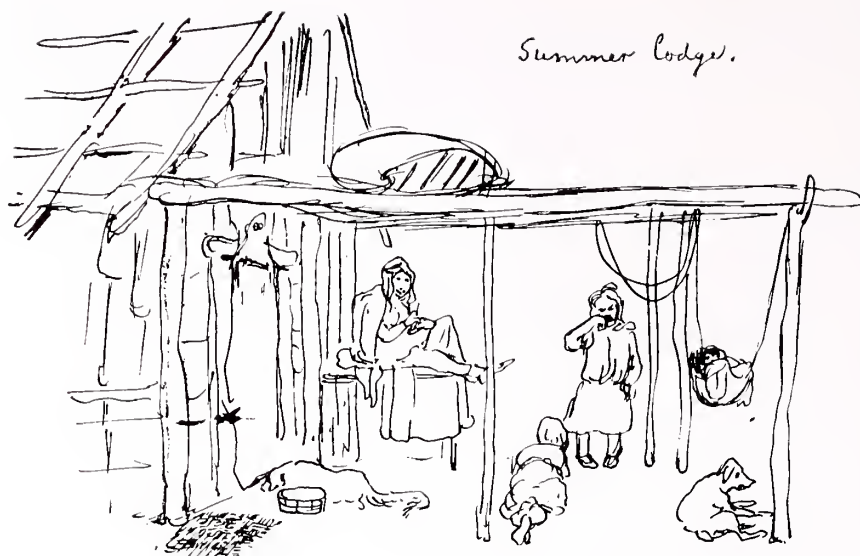
THIS BRIEF story of the Sioux Uprising of 1862 sets the stage for more detailed accounts which follow. In them are presented a few of the many facets of the Sioux War, mainly in the words of participants, both Indian and white. This special issue of Minnesota History commemorates the bloody events that took place on the Minnesota frontier a hundred years ago—an episode which remains the state's greatest tragedy and has moral implications for all Americans and all generations. Ed.

THE GREAT UPRISING of the Minnesota Sioux in August, 1862, had been many years in developing. Like other tribes, the Sioux were made desperate by the tide of white settlement which swept westward across America. For centuries their economy had been based upon hunting and fishing and the wild foodstuffs provided by nature, but the steady reduction of their hunting grounds and the killing off of fur-bearing and food animals through the introduction of firearms made the problem of existence acute for them.

By successive treaties, signed in 1805, 1837, 1851, and 1858, the Sioux had gradually surrendered practically all their Minnesota lands, save for a ten-mile-wide reservation on the south bank of the Minnesota River, extending from a point a few miles west of New Ulm to Big Stone Lake. Within this narrow strip the Indians were concentrated, subsisting principally on annuities of money and goods provided by the

government under the terms of the various treaties. They were supervised from two administrative centers or agencies, one for the Lower (or eastern) Sioux bands at Redwood near present-day Redwood Falls, and the other located near the mouth of the Yellow Medicine River in the territory of the Upper Sioux.

The reservation included no good hunting ground, but there was plenty of fine agricultural land. For nearly forty years the government had been endeavoring to render the Minnesota Sioux self-supporting by teaching them to farm. Some headway had been made by missionaries, first at Kaposia and later at Traverse des Sioux, Redwood, and Yellow Medicine. Government farmers had been attached to the agencies as early as 1830, and by the summer of 1862 the Sioux agent reported that 1,110 acres of corn, 300 acres of potatoes, 90 acres of turnips and rutabagas, and a large quantity of field and garden vegetables had been planted "for



and by the Upper Sioux." The Lower Sioux accounted for an almost equal quantity.

Though a few Indians, mainly those converted to Christianity by missionaries like Thomas S. Williamson and Stephen R. Riggs, did undertake to become farmers and adopted the clothing and habits of white men, the majority of the tribe remained roving hunters. Those who clung to the traditional way of life looked with contempt upon the "cut-hairs" who demeaned themselves by following a plow. Thus a wide and definite line of cleavage developed between the "breeches" and "blanket" factions, adding to the bitterness of the approaching crisis.

THE OPENING of the Minnesota Valley to white settlement after the treaties of 1851 brought a tremendous influx of homeseekers, many of them from Eastern states or from Europe. Knowing little of Indians, and encountering them only as hungry, usually harmless beggars, they treated them with tolerant contempt. The story of the housewife who punished an Indian for stealing a piece of pork from a kettle of beans by pouring a teakettle full of hot water over him could no doubt be duplicated many times. By 1862 few settlers had any apprehension of trouble with their red neighbors.

This complacency extended to the Sioux agent, Thomas J. Galbraith. A political appointee named to the office by the incoming Republican administration in 1860, he had replaced Joseph R. Brown, an experienced frontiersman who had been sympathetic to the problems of the Sioux. Despite numerous indications of unrest, Galbraith so little appreciated the danger that on August 18, the day of the outbreak, he was at St. Peter en route to Fort Snelling with a company of young whites and mixed-bloods recruited about the reservation for service in the Civil War.

Earlier in that very month he had been confronted by a hunger riot at the Upper Agency. The bands were in the habit of assembling at the two agencies upon their return from the spring hunts to receive their annuity. About the middle of July, 1862, the Upper Sioux gathered at Yellow Medicine to the number of nearly five thousand, and as usual when such large groups of Indians come together, they had no reserves of food and were in a starving condition. The provisions and annuity goods were on hand in the agency warehouse, but the gold coin for the money payment had been delayed.

Supported by a small force of volunteer troops under the command of Lieutenant Timothy J. Sheehan, Galbraith held off the

Indians for nearly three weeks by doling out enough provisions to prevent actual starvation. On the morning of August 4, however, the red men refused to wait longer, surrounded the military camp with a strong cordon of warriors, and broke into the warehouse. The lieutenant stood his ground to the extent of training a mountain howitzer upon the Indians, but joined the missionaries in counseling moderation. At last Galbraith issued the annuity goods and provisions, and the Indians, somewhat pacified by this action, dispersed with the understanding that they were to be summoned when the gold arrived. No similar riot occurred at the Redwood Agency, but the Indians in their nearby villages became more sullen as the hot August days passed.

Galbraith's capitulation at the Upper Agency marked the second time that the Minnesota Sioux had successfully defied the authority of the United States as represented by the Indian agent and the military. Five years earlier, in March, 1857, an outlaw band of Sioux headed by Inpaduta had swept through the Lake Okoboji region of northern Iowa and the settlement of Jackson in southwestern Minnesota, leaving nearly forty settlers dead in their wake. They had then drifted leisurely west to the



Winter Lodge.

James River, and an infantry party from Fort Ridgely merely made itself ridiculous in Indian eyes by attempting to force its way through the deep snowdrifts of mid-March and capture mounted red men. Sioux respect for the government's authority was further dimmed by a knowledge of the struggle going on in the South. The exodus of young men from the frontier regions and the attempts to recruit volunteers even among half-breeds on the reservation, encouraged the Indians to feel that the white man's power could be challenged.



A TRIVIAL incident provided the spark to ignite the magazine of pent-up Sioux rage. On Sunday afternoon, August 17, 1862, a party of four young braves from the Rice Creek band of Lower Sioux, on a hunting expedition near Acton in Meeker County, came upon a hen's nest in the woods near a cabin. Their debate over whether to steal the eggs led to dares, and one young man, his bravery challenged, declared that he was not afraid to go to the cabin and shoot the white man. The others accompanied him, and thus came about the cold-blooded killing of five people, two of them women. Appalled at what they had done, the four murderers stole a team and drove directly to their camp, a short distance above the Redwood Agency.

Upon hearing their tale, the leader of the band, Red Middle Voice, took them immediately to Chief Shakopee, whose village was nearby. Convinced that punishment for the deed would fall upon all the Lower Sioux, Shakopee and his braves favored war, but the support of other bands and leaders was necessary. Messengers were sent out, calling for an immediate council at the house of Chief Little Crow.

Though not the tribe's titular head, and held in disfavor by many because he had taken a leading part in signing the unpopular treaty of 1858, Little Crow was nevertheless regarded by most of the Lower Sioux as their natural leader. Being more widely traveled and better acquainted with the white man's civilization than his followers, he was keenly aware of the desperation—even hopelessness—of the proposed war. But he was proud of his reputation as a military strategist, and perhaps he feared the loss of prestige that taking a stand for peace might involve. Thus he reluctantly agreed to lead the warriors in their attempt to regain Minnesota for the red man.

The first fury of their attack was directed at the small white community centered about the Lower Agency, which was looted and burned on the morning of August 18.



Terrified refugees, escaping across the Minnesota River, carried news of the massacre to Fort Ridgely, some thirteen miles below. Captain John S. Marsh of the Fifth Minnesota, who was in command at the fort, assumed that the disturbance was local and set out with a detachment of only forty-six men. They marched directly into an ambush at Redwood Ferry, and twenty-four, including a half-breed interpreter, were killed, while Marsh himself was drowned in attempting to escape by swimming across the river.

Fortunately for Fort Ridgely orders had been sent to Lieutenant Sheehan, whose company was then en route to Fort Ripley, to return immediately. Galbraith also had been notified, and he hurried back from St. Peter with his band of recruits. Thus by the night of Tuesday, August 19, the garrison, including armed refugees, had been increased to some 180 fighting men.

Meanwhile the Indians wasted precious hours which might have been used to strike at the main centers of resistance before the whites had time to gather their forces. Never tightly organized or subject to discipline, many of the warriors scattered over the countryside, killing, capturing, burning, and looting, despite the efforts of Little Crow and other leaders to assemble them for a major offensive. Nor were all the Sioux committed to the struggle. Some Lower Sioux chiefs, notably Wabasha and Taopi, opposed the war and held aloof, while the Upper Sioux bands were even more sharply divided.

NOT UNTIL the afternoon of August 20 did the Indians launch an organized attack on Fort Ridgely. The outpost was poorly located for defensive purposes. Unprotected by a palisade, the cluster of buildings was situated high on a bluff to the north of the Minnesota River, with deep wooded ravines extending up to it at several points. In their first attack the Indians were able to mass their forces under cover of the gullies, and with a bold rush reach the log dwellings in

the rear of the barracks almost before the garrison realized that the assault had begun. Vigorous and accurate use of several pieces of artillery under the command of Sergeant John Jones broke up the attack, but the firing continued until nightfall.

Again on August 22 the Sioux attempted to take the fort, this time with a much larger force. After several hours of stubborn fighting they were once more driven off with the aid of well-placed artillery shells. Thus ended the fighting at Fort Ridgely, with total white casualties of three dead and thirteen wounded.

Meanwhile, hard fighting had been going on at the town of New Ulm, on the south bank of the Minnesota some eighteen miles southeast of Fort Ridgely. Late in the afternoon of August 19 a raiding party of Indians made its appearance in the rear of the town and began firing, but barricades which had been erected in the business section and long-range rifles in the hands of determined citizens, together with a heavy thunderstorm, deterred the Indians from pressing home the attack. On that same evening, Judge Charles E. Flandrau with a company of 125 men recruited in St. Peter and other valley towns reached New Ulm. Flandrau was chosen commander and went to work to strengthen the town's defenses.

On Saturday morning, August 23, the Indians again massed on the outskirts of New Ulm, and soon made a determined assault on the town. Forcing their way up from the river, they gained a foothold in the buildings of the lower town, but vigorous street fighting with the barricades as a line of support broke up the attack. Not until after dark did the Indians finally withdraw. Sunday morning saw some long-range skirmishing, but the worst was over.

WHILE the Minnesota Valley settlers were of necessity conducting their own defense, a relief force had been hastily organized at Fort Snelling. Composed of raw recruits and commanded by Henry H. Sibley — who was commissioned a colonel for the purpose



The buffalo dance —

— it advanced as far as St. Peter on August 22. There it was delayed by lack of proper arms and ammunition. With the arrival of reinforcements and supplies, Sibley and his force pressed on to Fort Ridgely, which they reached on August 28, having encountered no hostile Sioux.

Sibley was careful and deliberate in his movements, being hampered at every step by inexperienced men and an acute shortage of mounted troops. Such as he had of the latter were sent out with burial parties, while the main force remained in camp at Fort Ridgely. One of these detachments, under the command of Major Joseph R. Brown, buried the massacre victims at the Lower Agency, then proceeded to encamp for the night of September 1 on the open prairie at Birch Coulee, near the present town of Morton. Early the next morning the force was surrounded by Indians and besieged for some thirty hours, suffering heavy casualties. It was finally relieved by the advance of Sibley's entire command.

Moving slowly up the Minnesota Valley, Sibley encountered the Indians in a haphazard but decisive battle near Wood Lake on September 23 and dispersed their forces. Meanwhile the growing group of Sioux who opposed the war had taken advantage of the absence of Little Crow and his followers during the battle and seized control of the large number of white captives. The presence of these prisoners—mostly women and children—held as hostages by the enemy had hitherto complicated Sibley's task. Outmaneuvered by both the whites and their own people, Little Crow and his immediate supporters fled to the Dakota plains, leaving the rest of the tribe to liberate the captives and surrender to Sibley.

On the afternoon of September 26 the white commander entered the Sioux camp and received 241 captives, of whom ninety-one were white and the rest mixed-bloods. Some twenty-eight more were also freed within the next few days. The majority of the Minnesota Sioux either surrendered to Sibley or were captured in military raids during the succeeding weeks. Those men against whom any evidence could be brought were placed on trial before a military commission. Cases to the number of 392 were tried between September 28 and November 3 on charges of murder, rape, and general participation in the outbreak, and the sentence in 303 cases was hanging. President Lincoln's revision of the list, however, saved all but forty from the death penalty. One of these received a commutation, one died, and the remaining thirty-eight were hanged at Mankato on December 26, 1862.

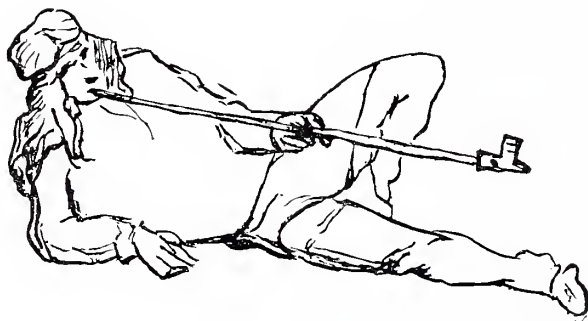
The hostiles who escaped with Little Crow located in the Devil's Lake region of

North Dakota, from whence they made sporadic raids against the Minnesota border during the next three years. On one such foray in the vicinity of Hutchinson on July 3, 1863, Little Crow was shot and killed by an armed settler. Two other leaders, Shakopee and Medicine Bottle, who had fled to Canada, were kidnapped in January, 1864, by Americans with English assistance. Taken to Fort Snelling, they were hanged on November 11, 1865.

PUBLIC SENTIMENT in Minnesota remained bitter against the Sioux, and Congress was responsive to demands for the complete removal of the tribe from the state. By acts of February 16 and March 3, 1863, all treaties with the Sioux were abrogated, and they, together with the Winnebago—who were generally suspected of sympathy with the uprising—were moved to a reservation at Crow Creek on the Missouri River above Fort Randall. There the luckless Indians were taken by crowded steamboats and left to live or die. Many did the latter before the government relented and moved them to a more hospitable spot on the Niobrara River.

The number of lives lost in the uprising will never be definitely known. It has been variously estimated at from 450 to 800. Survivors' accounts include numerous incidents of horror and brutality, as well as shining examples of heroism and fidelity among both Indians and whites.

For Minnesota the outbreak meant only a temporary setback in the tide of settlement, but for the Sioux nation it marked the beginning of nearly a generation of fruitless warfare in defense of their homeland.



THE ILLUSTRATIONS in this article have been adapted for reproduction from sketches made by Frank B. Mayer during a sojourn among the Minnesota Sioux in 1851. The infant shown at the bottom of page 95 is resting in a traditional cradleboard; the brave on page 96 is setting forth on a hunt; and the Indian opposite is smoking a pipe whose bowl of red stone was no doubt quarried in southwestern Minnesota. The originals are in the Newberry Library, Chicago.

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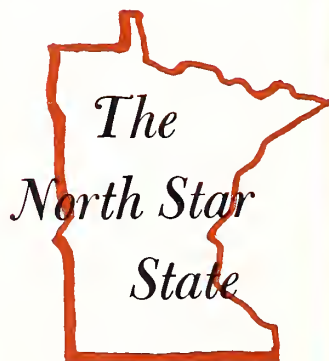
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• PLEASE make checks payable to the Minnesota Historical Society. Of each annual payment, five dollars are dues and the remainder a contribution that is deductible for income tax purposes.

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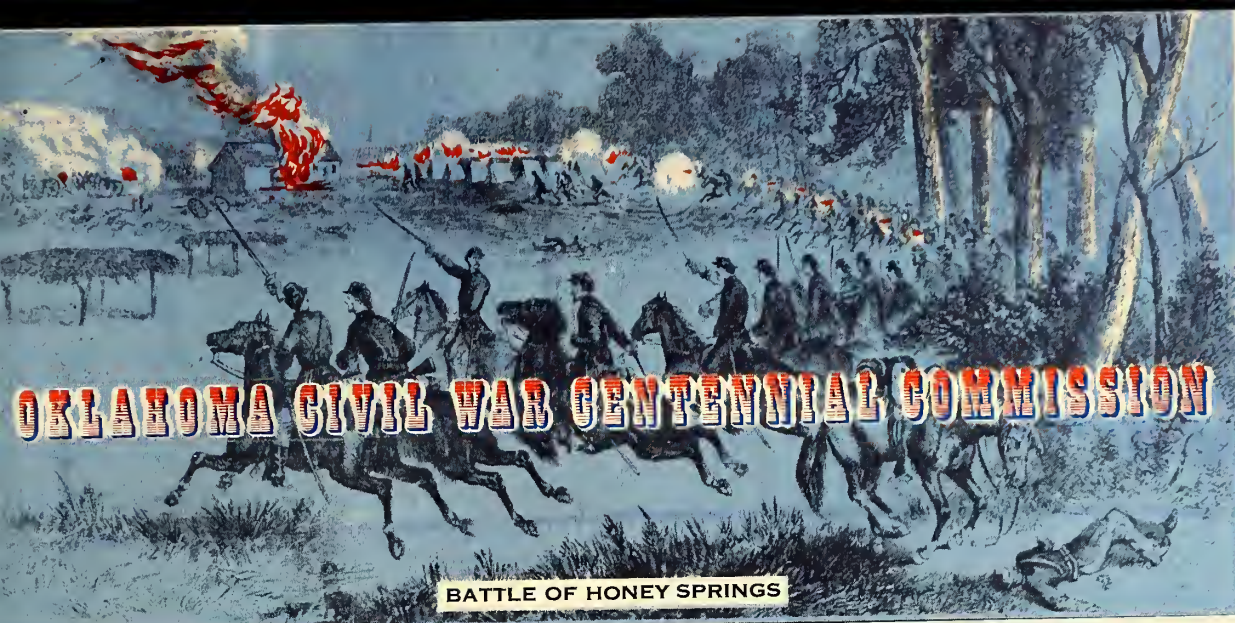


COMING SOON

Murder in Minnesota

By Walter N. Trenerry

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Dear Everybody:

This is written on the official stationery of the Oklahoma Civil War Centennial Commission. The first portion of this letter consists of an article which I wrote for the American Scene, the official publication of the Gilcrease Museum and Library. Thomas Gilcrease devoted a lifetime and a huge fortune to putting together one of the finest collections of Americana in existence. How a man can leave a better memorial than did he I cannot imagine.

And it will ever be to the credit of the people of Tulsa that they voted bonds in an amount sufficient to save the collection for their city and state, and to properly house it. I feel flattered no end that the editors of the American Scene asked me to prepare the following article on the Civil War in Oklahoma which is incorporated in the current issue of the American Scene.

Civil War in Indian Territory

THE PART PLAYED BY OKLAHOMA, then known as "The Indian Territory," in the Civil War, is not regarded as of great importance by many students. And the battles and campaigns involved were minor as compared to those in the East. As a result, the story of its participation is a most neglected field. But the war was as tragic, and even more so, to the dwellers in the "Territory" as it was to people in other parts of the country.

In all the annals of warfare, it is questionable if a more senseless happening has ever been recorded than the participation of the Five Civilized Indian Tribes in the American Civil War. To all intents and purposes they were independent nations with nothing at stake in the White Man's embroilments. They had been uprooted from their ancestral homelands and transplanted in the wilderness by Southern people. Certainly, no allegiance was owed to the South. In what is now Eastern Oklahoma they had built a civilization which was virtually destroyed by the holocaust of a war that was not of their making. In the preceding quarter of a century they had risen to a plane in education and economy which was comparable to much of the culture of the effete East and South.

Unfortunately for the Indians, most of their ties were with the South and Southern people. They had come from that area, many had intermarried with white people of the South, and a considerable number of them owned Negro slaves. In addition, the agents representing the Federal Government in the Territory at the war's beginning were,

in the main, from the South with strong sympathies for the Secession movement.

The decision of most of the members of the Five Civilized Tribes to go with the South had one definite and very important effect on the overall war situation. The Indians, aided by a few Texans, were able to keep Federal troops from reaching the Red River until the end of hostilities. With her Northern border thus protected, Texas was enabled to send most of her troops and supplies to aid Confederate armies in the East.

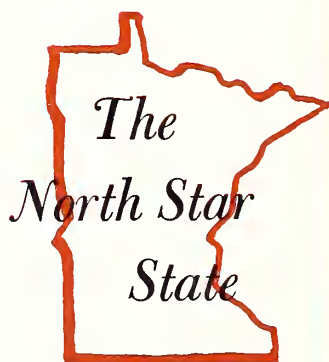
News of the gradual withdrawal of the Southern states from the Union penetrated the Indian country bringing about much discussion and unrest. But not until the firing on Fort Sumter was the Territory galvanized into action. Federal garrisons were located at Fort Smith just across the border in Arkansas, at Forts Washita and Arbuckle in the Territory and at Fort Cobb in the country of the Plains Indians. Washington authorities realized Confederate troops from Arkansas and Texas would soon occupy these posts and capture garrisons and supplies if they were not speedily evacuated.

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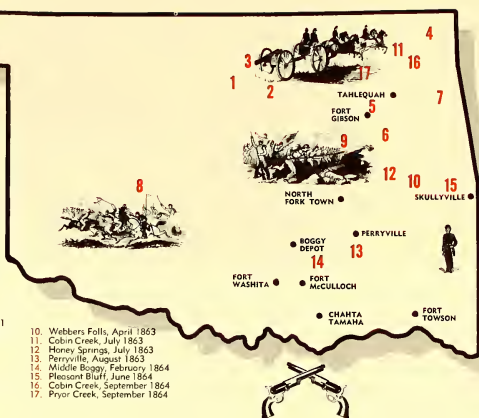


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1. Round Mountain, November 1861
2. Chusto Tolaosh, December 1861
3. Chustenhlah, December 1861
4. Cowskin Prairie, June 1862
5. Locust Grove, July 1862
6. Boyou Menard, July 1862
7. Fort Wayne, October 1862
8. Wichita Agency, October 1862
9. Fort Davis, December 1862
10. Webbers Falls, April 1863
11. Cobin Creek, July 1863
12. Honey Springs, July 1863
13. Perryville, August 1863
14. Middle Boggy, February 1864
15. Pleasant Bluff, June 1864
16. Cabin Creek, September 1864
17. Pryor Creek, September 1864

MAR 15 1963

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manding this post, of his peril and then hurried on to search out Emory in the wilderness.

Within hours after Averell left Fort Smith, Captain Sturgis followed with his command, even as a steamboat loaded with Confederate troops was making its appearance. After a thrilling four day and night journey through hostile country, Averell reached the vicinity of Fort Washita. The approach of Texas troops had caused Emory to abandon this post and proceed toward Fort Arbuckle. On the march Averell, and, shortly after, Sturgis' command overtook the Union troops.

They arrived too late at Fort Arbuckle. It had already fallen and the garrison had been captured. The same day members of the garrison who were paroled, joined Emory to hurry northwestward toward Fort Cobb, which Emory had also ordered abandoned. Thirty miles northeast of Fort Cobb the final junction of Union forces in the Indian country was effected. But what was to be done? Few had ever traveled northward over this area which since the days of Coronado had been regarded as "the Great American Desert."

The service of the renowned scout, Black Beaver, was now enlisted. This valiant warrior had settled into a prosperous agricultural life on the frontier. But he agreed to guide the troops to Leavenworth. The pursuing Confederates destroyed his farmstead and drove off his livestock. An unappreciative government never reimbursed the loyal Indian for the great sacrifice he made.

Jesse Chisholm, a half-Cherokee trader who remained loyal to the Union, accompanied the retreating troops. At what is now Wichita, Kansas, he dropped out of the caravan to remain during the war years, while Black Beaver and Emory's command continued on to Fort Leavenworth. The evacuation of the Indian territory and the arduous trip over supposedly arid plains was accomplished without the loss of a man.

The Wichitas and some smaller allied tribes of the Plains were in a fair way to adopting the White Man's way at the time war struck. But the wild tribesmen of the Southwestern Plains, Comanche, Kiowa, Arapaho, Cheyenne and Apache, interpreted the abandonment of Fort Cobb and Fort Arbuckle and the Texas posts as a sign of weakness and with redoubled fury continued raids on White settlements and civilized Indians alike. The loyal Wichita fled to Kansas where they joined Jesse Chisholm for the duration, leaving a permanent recording of their Kansas sojourn by giving their name to Kansas' largest city. And, as a result of his flight with the troops over the route up which Texans were later to drive millions of cattle, Jesse Chisholm's name has been indelibly written into fame and story in the "Chisholm Trail."

Into the peaceful environment of the land of the Five Civilized Tribes in 1861 came a Yankee lawyer who was to render more harm to these Indians than have the machinations of all other White men before and since. Albert Pike was born in Boston. Possessing a wanderlust he roamed over much of the frontier before settling at Little Rock, Arkansas. Upon the outbreak of the war, Jefferson Davis sent him as an emissary of the new Confederate government to the Five Civilized Tribes. Through judicious use of whiskey, flattery, threats, cajolery and rumored bribery, he persuaded virtually all of the Choctaws and Chickasaws, most of the Cherokees, and many of the Seminoles and the Creeks to side with the South. The end result of the Yankee lawyer's activities were four years of robbery, arson and murder in the Territory.

But he met his match in one Indian. Aging Creek chieftain Opothleyahola had fought against the removal of his tribe from their ancestral lands in Alabama. He remembered who had brought so much misery to his people. It was not Northerners but the same Southerners who were now endeavoring to destroy the Union he had come to respect. He would have no part of Albert Pike's blandishments. He strove desperately to maintain his tribe in a position of neutrality as did Chief John Ross of the Cherokees.

The defeat of General Nathaniel Lyons' Union Army at Wilson Creek in Missouri in August, 1861, and the capture of Lexington and a Union Army by General Sterling Price in the next month, brought about a collapse of the Indians' neutralist efforts. John Ross threw in the sponge and went with the Confederates. But not Opothleyahola. He remained loyal to the Union but, at the same time, realized the position of the loyal Creeks was rapidly becoming untenable. Preparations were made to go into exile in Kansas.

Colonel Douglas H. Cooper, a former Indian agent who went with the South, determined to prevent this exodus. Upon the approach of his command of Texans, augmented by Indian troops under command of Colonel Daniel McIntosh, Lt. Colonel Chilly McIntosh and Major John Jumper, the Creeks hurriedly left their homes and started for Kansas. They were overtaken and a sanguinary battle fought at Round Mountain. The Creeks possessed enough ammunition to put up a real battle. Cooper's command withdrew after inflicting heavy losses on the Creeks but without accomplishing his purpose.

At Caving Banks, near Tulsey Town, the forerunner of modern Tulsa, Cooper again attacked Opothleyahola. Defection of a considerable number of his Cherokee Indian units caused Cooper to again withdraw from the battle. But a few days later, in the Battle of Chustenahlah, he pretty well accomplished his mission. The exhausted Creeks, with their ammunition depleted, could offer little

resistance. After more heavy losses the survivors fled in wild disorder, abandoning their earthly possessions, and arriving in Montgomery County, Kansas, completely destitute.

Here they passed the first years of the war in utter poverty and here their heroic chieftain died. Opothleyahola proved himself to be one of the noblest of the Redmen. His name has never been given the recognition to which it is entitled.

The rest of the fighting during the Civil War by organized forces revolved around efforts of the Union troops to fight their way to the Red River. Because of the great distance from sources of supply, the North was never able to rally sufficient forces to push to Texas' northern border. Even worse, the constant bickering between Union commanders prevented any concerted and continuous campaign.

The first effort to invade the Indian country was organized in January, 1862 by Brigadier-General James H. Lane, United States Senator from Kansas. His abortive expedition, which never got off the ground, was known as the "Lane Expedition." Lane got into an argument with the commander of the Department of Kansas, Major-General David Hunter, and on February 16, he resigned his commission.

Major-General Blunt assumed command of the Department of Kansas on May 15th. Field command of the expedition was given to Colonel William Weer, an attorney from Wyandotte, Kansas. The Confederates were attacked in the battles of Cowskin Prairie and Locust Grove. As was true of most of the battles in the Indian country, the Union command was left in possession of the field. Nearly every engagement followed the same pattern. The Confederates fought well until ammunition and other supplies were depleted and then retired, but generally after inflicting such losses on the invaders that they were never able to follow up the victory gained. The first expedition was abandoned in mid-July after marching to within fifteen miles of Fort Gibson, apparently because of differences arising between the crusty leaders.

The second Federal invasion was undertaken by General James G. Blunt in October. At Fort Wayne he attacked Cooper's forces and drove them from the field. At the same time, loyal Indians attacked the Wichita agency near Fort Cobb. They destroyed the buildings of Agent Leeper and massacred most of the Tonkawa tribe which had sought refuge nearby.

In the following two months occurred rather inconclusive battles at Cane Hill and Prairie Grove. They did enable Colonel William A. Phillips to occupy Fort Gibson and destroy Fort Davis which had been established by the Confederates nearby. Dissension continued. Phillips could not get much needed reinforcements and supplies and

withdrew to Kansas. The following spring Fort Gibson was again occupied by Union troops who thereafter held it precariously until the end of the war.

Actually, much of the activities of the Federals from then on were devoted to holding supply lines open to Fort Gibson. The battles of Pea Ridge and Prairie Grove in Northwestern Arkansas broke the power of Confederates in that state. Fort Smith was taken and from it forays into Indian Territory were made. Indecisive battles were fought at Webbers Falls and Cabin Creek and in July, 1863 General James G. Blunt left Fort Scott with the largest army to be gathered in the Territory. He arrived at Fort Gibson on the eleventh. Immediately the army crossed the Arkansas River and attacked General Cooper's command on Elk Creek in a battle which has become known as Honey Springs. It developed into the Territory's largest and bloodiest conflict. But, as usual, the Confederates exhausted their ammunition and retired to Fort Washita. Again the Union force could not follow up its advantage and recrossed the Arkansas to Fort Gibson.

In August Blunt recrossed the river and an inconclusive skirmish transpired at Perryville. But here General Blunt's troubles with superiors came to a head and he was recalled in October, 1863. The Confederate troops were demoralized, unpaid, poorly clothed, not always well fed, lacking arms, and ammunition and often poorly disciplined, but the constant dissension among Union officers prevented their taking advantage of such a situation.

Blunt was directed to report to Fort Scott. At Baxter Springs his command, consisting of two companies of cavalrymen, his band and a group of civilians were attacked by the notorious Quantrill's guerrilla band. The cavalrymen ignominiously fled leaving eighty-five helpless musicians and civilians to be massacred. Among the victims was James O'Neill, an artist for *Leslie's Weekly* who had accompanied General Blunt in his Indian Territory campaign. O'Neill drew the picture best known concerning the war in the Territory. It is a scene from the Battle of Honey Springs which was printed in *Leslie's Weekly* at the time and is now used on the masthead of the Oklahoma Civil War Centennial Commission stationery.

The last serious campaign saw Colonel Phillips drive to within thirty miles of Fort Washita in February, 1864. But valiant resistance on the part of Indians under command of General Stand Watie, who had become recognized as the ablest of the Confederate Indian leaders, and Colonel Tandy Walker, caused this command, which made deepest penetration into the Territory, to retire. Stand Watie's activities earned him the sobriquet "The Indian Swamp Fox" because his warfare was modeled after the manner of Francis Marion of Revolutionary War fame.

The Indian country lapsed into such a state of anarchy that the law of the jungle was about all that prevailed. Stealing cattle and running them into Kansas became a prevailing activity.

Simultaneously with General Sterling Price's invasion of Missouri, which culminated in the Battle of Westport, Generals Gano and Watie moved up the Grand River Valley. At Cabin Creek in September, 1864, they were so fortunate as to encounter what was probably the largest wagon train capture anywhere during the war. Loss of this huge amount of supplies almost forced the Union to again abandon Fort Gibson. It did give the Confederates enough supplies of every kind to enable them to continue stiff resistance until the bitter end.

Defeat of Price at Westport and the retreat of his be-draggled troops through the Indian Country signaled the approaching end to Union and Confederate Indians alike. Union-sympathizing Indians began drifting back to their ruined homes as did their Confederate counterparts from Texas.

The last Confederate general to surrender was Stand Watie. On June 23, 1865, at Doaksville, he laid down his arms. The Indians were then subjected to the same severe "reconstruction" treatment which was dealt out by the Northern radicals who assumed control after Abraham Lincoln's death.

#

What a contrast between our Governor and President Kennedy. About the best description I have yet heard about our President and his family was paraphrased from the rhyme of the Ancient Mariner by a Tennessee Democratic friend:-

"Kennedys, Kennedys everywhere, but not a one to think!"

I find it difficult to believe we have leaders who after 33 years of pump priming and constant deficits would come out with bigger deficits as a solution to our economic ills. How any business man could endorse such a program is beyond me. I hope my eyes deceived me and that I did not read executives of the Prudential Life Insurance Company made statements favoring such a shortsighted course.

It all boils down to the sad fact that a Democracy, which apparently is a form of society in which everyone is allowed to vote, cannot survive. Such actions as John Kennedy proposes only hastens the day when old Mother Necessity in the guise of the man on horse back will force some common sense into us at the point of a bayonet. The siren call of unscrupulous and irresponsible seekers of office appealing to the selfishness of unthinking voters brings on the downfall of every democracy and John Kennedy's recent state of the union budget messages would indicate we are well on our way.

By no stretch of fact or imagination can the Tennessee Valley Authority (T V A) be classified as anything but a cancerous growth yet the Kennedy budget calls for throwing away eight hundred million dollars more in the form of steam-electric generating plants on this monstrosity. The latest map I have seen shows great sections, if not the greater part of the Tennessee Valley, is now classified as depressed areas. After nearly thirty years of spending billions to make it a Garden of Eden we have accomplished the reverse.

All this money being spent on space ventures is a lot of hooey. I am inclined to look upon it as a vast basic research project and as such some good for humanity might come out of it. But the idea that it is necessary to spend ourselves into bankruptcy simply to beat the Russians to the Moon, Mars or wherever we are headed, is simply ridiculous. Talk about keeping up with the Jones'. That is the example to end all examples.

The cruelest of all is the social security hoax. A few who die before total inflation engulfs us will get something out of it. But most of the millions who have abandoned or who never adopted any other form of savings are going to learn they were defrauded and will face old age with approximately nothing. Anyone who

doubts it should give a glance to Count Bismark's social security cards issued in Germany while he was running things. There are Germans still living who possess these interesting but worthless mementos.

President Kennedy's budget is loaded with other items which just as easily or more easily could be dispensed with. The Peace Corps is one. I do not suppose it is possible to spend as much money as is going into that fantasy without accomplishing something. But I wonder if our President ever heard of the 35,000 Christian missionaries whom the voluntary contributions of generous Americans maintain around the globe. We would accomplish much more by turning our Peace Corps money over to these dedicated people for proper distribution. Better still would be to disperse with the Peace Corps and apply the money it is spending on the national debt.

The swollen budget and our ever increasing foreign problems remind me of a letter I once received from Senator Fullbright. The Senator's older brother, Jack, was a good friend of mine during student days at the University of Missouri. One day I noticed a letter in the Wall Street Journal Jack had written reciting the life the family had led in Missouri before proceeding to Arkansas and protesting the current wild spending of our federal government. I sent this letter to the Senator with a suggestion he pay heed to his older brother's sound suggestions. In a courteous reply the Senator declared:-

"Jack just does not understand the problems of the government."

After the passing of several more years I have joined Jack in lack of understanding and I think that by now the Senator should do likewise. I would say our government is getting dizzier by the minute and less possible to understand by the second.

It will take more evidence than has yet come to light to convince me the Cuban crisis of last autumn was anything but a phony created to win the election. J.F.K. and Lyndon Johnson discovered the campaign tunes they were playing were not going over, so they played the age old game of distracting the voters by drumming up a foreign emergency.

The Russians are still in Cuba and they and their converts are still exporting communism to other Latin American co-

untries. More will be heard of that almost momentarily. It is just a question of time until some South or Central American country becomes a second Cuba. I do not believe I have ever really felt ashamed of my country until we groveled in the dust to kiss Castro's boots by paying him ransom for the "Bay of Pigs" prisoners. What a mockery Kennedy makes of patriots such as William Bainbridge when he cried:-

"I hope I may never again be sent to Algiers with Tribute unless I may be authorized to deliver it from the mouths of our cannon." His hope came true.

Where is the spirit that made Livingston proudly cry:-

"Millions for defense, but not one cent for Tribute!"

And Theodore Roosevelt's decisive and effective promise:-

"We want Perdicaris alive, or Raizuli dead."

For once I agree with a statement Fidel Castro made:-

"They had to agree to pay indemnification - Never has a President degraded the dignity of his office so much."

Of course, we are all glad to see the Cuban prisoners released from their dungeons. But liberty is never gained without suffering and certainly not by the sacrificing of others. Liberty can only be attained and maintained by suffering and sacrificing of life and property. If the Cubans ever regain their liberty it is only going to be by thousands laying down their lives.

Twenty miles south of Enid on the main street of Hennessey stands a statue erected by a grateful Congress to a sixteen year old boy - our first casualty in the Spanish-American War. Roy Cashion died charging up San Juan hill with Teddy Roosevelt's Rough Riders - not for his or his countrymen's liberty - but that Cuba might be free. In all the hundreds of times I have driven past that appealing monument, not once have I ever noticed a wreath or any memento to show that any Cuban has ever shown appreciation for the supreme sacrifice made by that lad so Cubans might enjoy liberty. This time I am in favor of Cubans laying down their own lives for their liberty and not obtaining it at the price of Americans.

Recently I read a worthwhile report by a great American on a Latin-American tour.

Eighty-five year old General Robert Wood, retired head of Sears Roebuck, inspected many of his company's activities in those lands. In each the thinking people are fearful their countries are going to be taken over by communists using Cuba as a spring board. They realize their way of life, their properties, and possibly their lives will soon be sacrificed because in the persons of Dwight Eisenhower and John Kennedy we drew Presidents who did not possess, and apparently do not now possess, the guts to enforce the Monroe Doctrine.

I have studied the Cuban situation enough to know what I would do if I were President. I would immediately invoke a complete naval and aerial blockade of the Communist infested island. I would let no one or anything in until every Russian and Fidel Castro and his helpers had left. Of course, that will cause Cubans to be inconvenienced and even to suffer from lack of outside products. But it would eventually bring the Communists out. It might even bring on war with Russia. But I feel the time has come to relive the example of the American patriot at Concord Bridge as he cried:-

"Do not fire unless fired upon. But if they want war let it begin here." A few minutes later he was dead, but the shot fired there was heard around the world and the United States of America and the spirit which has built it was born. If the Russians want war, let it begin in Cuba instead of Berlin or North Vietnam or some other far away place.

What ails our leaders? The State Department admits the source of Communist inspired unrest in Venezuela, Brazil and Peru is Havana and other Communist capitol. If this is allowed to go unchecked all Latin America will ere long be under the heel of Communist dictators. Then when the total inflation which irresponsibility of voters and leaders is bringing in the United States calls for a dictatorship the support for a Communist leader will be waiting in the Latin-American wings. This process is being speeded up by an official statement of American policy by the State Department:-

"To speak of victory in the cold war is impermissible."

I would like to see that clarified by someone in authority.

One angle of the Latin American problem of which I am growing weary is the

constant refrain:-

"It is all the fault of the upper classes because they won't pay any taxes even though they control all the land." This is probably true. But it is also partially true in the United States. The critics sole idea is to destroy whatever form of government is in vogue and sieze the wealth of the upper classes. Then they leave a vacuum into which some sort of a dictatorship, often Communist, inevitably moves. Until we can figure out a way to improvise a better form of government we better keep our nose out of their affairs. The plain truth is the rank and file of Latin-American countries are totally incapable of self government. To substitute more Cubans for their present way of life is no answer. Yet that is the only solution any American has yet engineered.

We have destroyed the Colonial system of our Eruopean allies, leaving nothing but vacuums into which utter chaos has moved. All are doomed to become dictatorships, very likely those of ruthless Communism. But in all the hue and cry raised in our State Department about colonies it never seems to get around to critizing the Russian colonies of Eastern Europe.

Le Grande Charles DeGaulle in my estimation is a pompous ass. Yet he is today the strongest character of the western world and I revel in the record he is making. Single handed and alone he has raised the French from the sea of despair brought on by irresponsible Democracy to its highest point since the days when under the stirring words of Marshall Foch:-

"They shall not pass," they stopped the flower of the German army under the Crown Prince at Verdum.

I understand little about DeGaulle's attitude concerning Britain's entrance into the Common Market, and his attitude toward NATO and us. But I do know that about 99% of all the information and theories fed us about the Common Market is pure guff. If DeGaulle has a veto power over its activities, it is as innocuous and worthless as the United Nations has proven itself to be.

It actually hurts me to see once proud Albion groveling at the feet of the imperious Frenchman. If Englishmen would tell him to go to and stay put, kick out their enervating, soul destroying Social-

ism and go to work, they would quickly regain their place in the sun. France has done it in four short years under the Grand Charles.

If there were any question in anyone's mind about the motivating power behind every move made by John Kennedy and his friends, his "eager-beaver" helper draft dodging Sorenson clarified it. The widely publicized tax cut is revealed as J.F.K.'s opening shot in the battle for re-election. And it serves notice on those of us who love our way of life, time has arrived to gird our loins and go forth to battle against the shallow irresponsibility of the Kennedy clan if we want to save it.

Last year's election opened the doors for other Republican candidates to soar into the lamplight, particularly Scranton of Pennsylvania and Romney of Michigan. And away over there on the horizon barely visible at the moment shines the light of our own wheat farming Governor, Henry Bellmon. His election as Oklahoma's first Republican Governor brought him into the national picture. And the earnestness with which our young Chief Executive has tackled the seemingly unsolvable problems he is facing is bringing the approbation of even some of the school teachers and welfare staters.

I am still riding with Barry Goldwater. If there is a way I can manage it, I am going to the Republican National Convention next year as a Goldwater delegate. Recently while flying a Braniff Airlines jet from Dallas to New York with my hard hitting, sometimes tactless, Dallas nephew Harry Bass, Jr., I voiced this ambition. I informed him:-

"I am for Goldwater even though I question if he can be either nominated or elected."

"If you are for him, you should not put any "if" in it," he protested. And he pulled out a tabulation of the 50 states electoral votes showing that by several combinations Senator Goldwater can be elected. That study convinced me I should pay no further heed to any "doubting Thomas." Sink or swim, live or die, from now and henceforth I am emulating Professor Cuie and my constant refrain shall be:-

"Barry Goldwater can and will be nominated and elected."

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Our Sapulpa grandchildren boarded a bus on a Friday afternoon and came to spend a week end with us. In the course of the visit the boys encountered their great-Uncle Clarence who told them of a boyish incident which occurred so long ago I did not realize my brother four years my junior was old enough at the time to remember it.

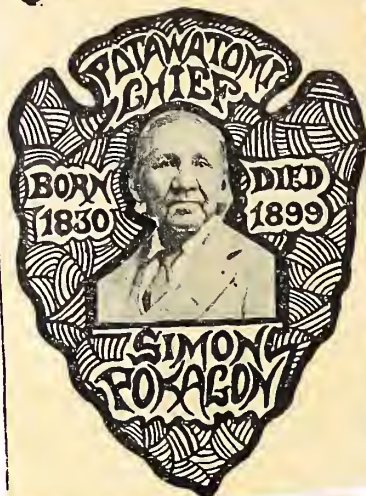
Our West Elm Street gang, numbering at least a score, in one of our downtown alley forays discovered a huge wicker chair which had been discarded. We lugged it into a storm sewer which ran under the property now occupied by the Bass Apartments. This brick structure was connected with wooden bridges at its West Elm and North Washington terminals. We placed the wicker chair at the bend midway in the tunnels length. Then we made wagers as to who could stay the longest after the chair was set on fire.

No one stayed but a brief moment. Through the billows of smoke which rolled out of each end of the tunnel raced a group of frightened youngsters. Why some one was not suffocated I will never know. The huge clouds of smoke quickly brought to the scene the entire fire department, all the police force and at least half the populace of the town. We were rounded up and given a severe but deserved lecture by the chief of police, which was nothing compared to the punishment meted out later by a group of embarrassed and irate fathers.

Our grandsons pressed me for further details about the affair. On Sunday afternoon time came to return them to their home.. They were nowhere to be found. At length, accompanied by their bosom pal, Kent McKeever, they appeared in a most bedraggled condition for a Sunday afternoon. Imaginations fired by the incident of sixty years ago, and guided by young Mr. McKeever, with the aid of a flashlight they had spent hours tramping in a network of storm sewers which begin near Indian Hills and terminate near Government Springs. Their anguished elders became pacified in the relief of their unkept but safe reappearance.

Sincerely,

HBB-



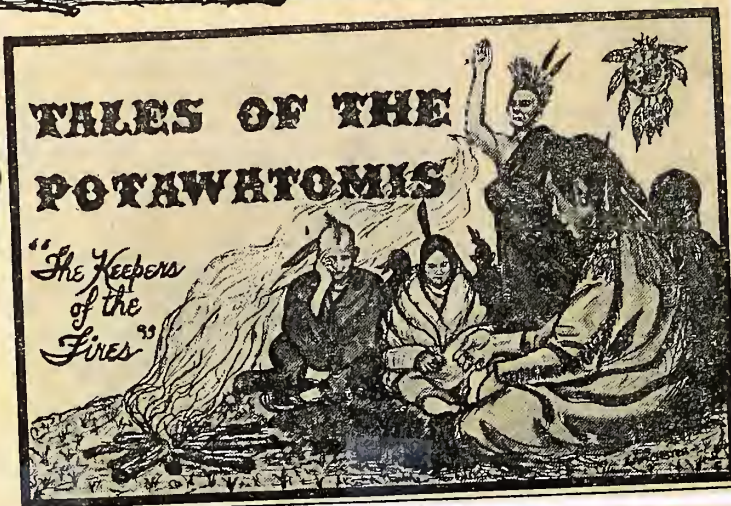
SIMON POKAGON Orator and Author

Part I—Address Delivered at
Elkhart, Indiana, October 9, 1894

Simon Pokagon was one of the last of the favorably and well known Potawatomi Chiefs from this area before this tribe and others became practically forgotten in the expanding, developing, predominately white midwestern section of our nation.

Pokagon's almost six years of college training, very unusual for an Indian youth, at three schools—Notre Dame and both Oberlin and Twinsburg in Ohio, ended when he married Angeline or Lonidaw Sinagaw, an attractive Indian maiden, and started fathering a family of three sons—William, Charles and Jerome, and a daughter named Cecilia.

Most of Pokagon's adult years were spent living primitively in a crude cabin in a wilderness area near present Rush lake in Allegan county, north of Hartford, Michigan, not far from the both sandy and rocky eastern shores of Lake Michigan. Always wretchedly poor



and the victim of many misfortunes, his life was constantly vexing and perplexing. An enjoyment of reading, books, literature, music and religion—mainly outgrowth of his college years, marked him as an individualistic and unusual redman, much misunderstood frequently, not only by his tribesmen but by pioneering white settlers and neighbors as well.

Start of Pokagon-Engle Friendship

Charles E. Engle, a young Yankee educated in New England, had migrated westward to start a career as a lawyer, editor and publisher in the frontier village of Hartford. One afternoon he became lost wandering about near there in the dense Michigan wilderness, and traveled footsore and weary for hours before finding a forest clearing. When he knocked at the slab door of a small log cabin, a smiling, young, English-speaking Indian greeted him. As young Engle inquired for directions, he was amazed upon observing that this Indian was holding in his hands a Bible printed in Greek from which he had been reading. He later learned that his

modest, literary host, Simon Pokagon, had attended three colleges. After accepting the hospitality of being sheltered and fed in an Indian hut, he was conducted back to Hartford the following morning by this new acquaintance.

As time passed these two congenial persons became increasingly devoted, both living to old age having enjoyed years of a mutually regarded relationship. Engle reportedly rendered over 40 years of legal and publishing services gratis to this grateful, talented but ill-fated redman.

Rare Birchbark Bound Books

Pokagon, always desperately in need of money, was frequently urged by Engle who was aware of the Indian's talented abilities, to write for publication and orate for profit. Pokagon reluctantly complied during the decade prior to his death and six books, five of which were birch bark bound, were published by Engle. These rare and unusual volumes are now collectors' items commanding high prices that would astound, bewilder, and enrich both Engle and Pokagon were they presently in the land of the living.

To further awaken public revival of an interest in past Midwestern Indian affairs, Pokagon was invited as a welcomed guest of honor by officials to attend the Columbian Exposition or Chicago World's Fair of 1893, and enjoyably did so participating while dressed in Indian attire—"buckskin, beads, blanket and feathered bonnet," in several historical celebrations.

Afterward, he began writing for national magazines and occasionally accepted speaking engagements for which he was poorly paid, usually addressing gatherings of old settlers (once at nearby Albion in Noble County), who had pioneered in this region during yesteryears of hardships.

Speech at Elkhart in 1894

One such occasion for his oratory occurred on October 9, 1894, when he spoke at Elkhart, Indiana, not many miles from his birthplace near Bertrand, Michigan. Excerpts from this address as recorded in the South Bend Tribune issued the next day follow.

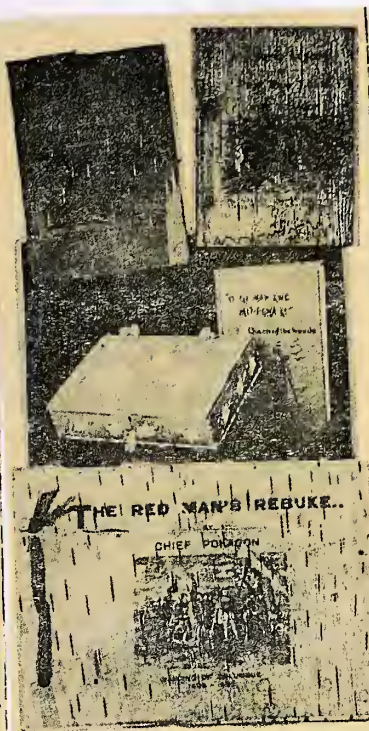
"Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen: I am indeed glad that I am permitted to address you, the pioneer fathers and mothers, with your sons and daughters, who here inhabit my Potawatomi fatherland and enjoy the paradise which you have reclaimed from a wild and unbroken forest. I assure you that this country still holds a sacred place in this Indian heart of mine. Tradition tells me that my tribe, the Potawatomis, migrated from the Atlantic ocean toward the setting sun in search of earthly happy hunting grounds. In their wanderings they found no place to satisfy and charm them until they reached these wide, extended plains. Here they found game in great abundance. Elk, buffalo, and deer stood unalarmed before the hunters' bended bows; fish swarmed the lakes and streams close to their shores; pigeons, ducks and geese moved in great clouds through the air flying so low that they fanned us with their wings; and our boys whose bows were terror to crows would often with arrows shoot them down.

"Here we once enjoyed ourselves in the lap of luxury. But now our campfires have all gone out, our council fires blaze no more, our wigwams and those who built

them, and their children have forever disappeared from this beautiful land and now I, almost alone, am left to behold it. Where cabins and wigwams once stood, cottages and palaces erected by the white race now glisten in the sun. Where we walked or rode in single file along our woodland trails, locomotives scream like monster beasts of prey rushing along their iron tracks dragging after them long trains of passenger cars filled with travelers, outstripping eagles in their flight. As I stand here and behold the mighty changes that have taken place all over the face of this broad land since my boyhood days, I feel in my heart as I did as a boy, when for the first time I beheld and arched rainbow spanning dark clouds of a departing storm.

"I have been requested to speak somewhat of my own history and people. In the fall of 1837 my father, Chief Leopold Pokagon, with several other chiefs, went to Washington to see "the Great White Chief of the U.S." in regard to keeping our homes here in this beautiful land, for it pained their hearts to think of having to leave them. They rode their ponies from here to Wheeling on the Ohio river, went from there to Baltimore by stage coaches, and on train cars from there to Washington. It took them three weeks to make the trip.

"In 1861, 24 years after my father's visit, I went along nearly the same route by rail to Washington in less than two days. I went to see the greatest and best white chief ever known—Abraham Lincoln. I was the first redman to shake hands and visit with him after his first inauguration. Lin-



coln talked to me as a father would to a son and was glad to hear that Indians were building churches and school houses. He had a sad look on his face, but I knew that he was a good man—for I heard it in his voice, saw it in his face, and felt it in his hand shaking. I told Lincoln how my father, long ago sold Chicago and the surrounding country to the U.S. for three cents per acre, and how we were now poor and needed our money. He said he was sorry and would help the Indians get our just dues.

"Three years later I again visited Lincoln who excused the delay in paying Indians because of the Civil War. He seemed bowed down with cares. Then in 1864, Gen. Grant was thundering for the overthrow of Richmond, while Gen. Sherman was making his grand march through Georgia to the sea. Sometimes after this visit we Indians were paid \$390,000.

"In 1874 I again visited Washington to see about getting the balance still due us, and met he "Great War Chief," President Grant. I had expected he would show great military superiority, but he kindly shook hands with me and gave me a cigar! We both sat down, talked, and smoked the pipe of peace. Grant thanked me for the peaceful loyalty of my people and for the Indian soldiers we furnished the North during the war. We still had about \$200,000 due us from Uncle Sam. Grant said there was a question about our claim. Later we Indians got a judgment against the government through the court of claims and believe we'll soon get 100 cents on the dollar as soon as Congress gets through scuffling over the tariff question.

"I have been requested to tell again tonight of the Potawatomi removal from Indiana by the government, but I cannot. My young heart when a boy back in 1838 was so touched by that sad story told me by my mother, that all through my youth and manhood I have

tried to forget it and it is too sad to retell tonight."

(Next follows general paragraphs in which he bitterly discussed "the evils of the serpent alcohol" on both reds and whites. He always ardently crusaded against drinking liquors. As he grew older he could scarcely talk or write at any length without getting side-tracked to discussing the ruinous curse resulting to the red race from firewater first sold and bartered to his people by Whites.)

"I must now close. I am getting old and feeble (64) and in all probability none of you will ever see my face again this side of the "happy hunting grounds." Hence, as a worn out specimen of the forest race about to step into the world beyond, I urge upon you, as you value the grand land you inherited, as you value homes, society and all that life holds most dear to you, to try to do all you can to banish this reptilian liquor monster from these lands. Then heaven will smile upon you and the votaries of temperance and intemperance will shake hands and rejoice together, and the sunshine of peace and plenty will lighten with joy and gladness this beautiful land. Farewell from Simon Pokagon."

Mrs. Davis, a former member of the society's manuscript department, wrote this article as a result of her research in editing the Henry H. Sibley Papers for microfilm publication under the auspices of the National Historical Publications Commission.

TWO Sioux War Orders: A Mystery Unraveled

JANE S. DAVIS

NEAR THE END of the Civil War's second year, Abraham Lincoln took time from the press of other matters to write a painstaking, three-page letter to Brigadier General Henry H. Sibley, newly named commander of the District of Minnesota in St. Paul. The president dated the first page of executive mansion stationery "December 6th, 1862," and then wrote out laboriously in his neat hand the multisyllabled names of thirty-nine Sioux Indians and half-breeds to be hung for murder or rape in the uprising of 1862 in Minnesota.

The letter, one of the most important documents owned by the Minnesota Historical Society, was donated in 1868 by Edward D. Neill, early Minnesota Presbyterian minister, educator, and historian. Neill, who was also one of Lincoln's secretaries, found the letter to Sibley among the president's papers after his assassination and got permission to take it as a memento.¹

In the hundred years since receiving the prized manuscript, the society has identified it in its collections as the original order Lincoln wrote to Sibley. However, it now appears after all this time that, although the

Neill gift is indisputably an original Lincoln manuscript, it was never sent to Sibley at all. Is it, then, a draft of the letter to Sibley? If so, where is the letter Lincoln actually sent to Sibley and is this in Lincoln's handwriting, too? Solving the puzzle means, in part, studying both Sibley's and Lincoln's connections with Indian trouble in Minnesota and also retracing the route of Sibley's official military papers.

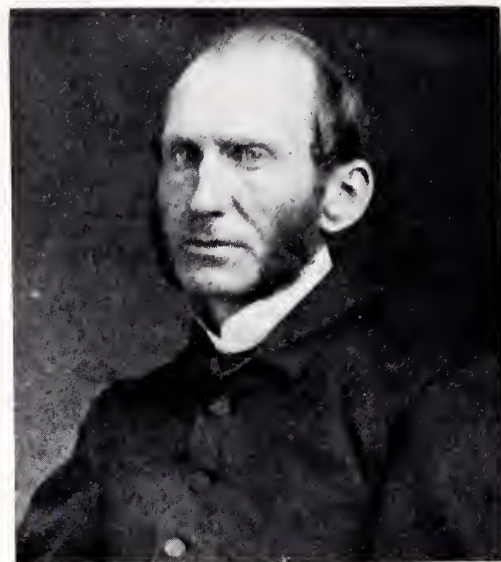
When news of the Sioux Outbreak reached Governor Alexander Ramsey on August 19, 1862, he at once turned to his old friend Henry Hastings Sibley, then fifty-one, to lead a military campaign against the Indians. Perhaps Minnesota's most prominent citizen, Sibley had served as the territory's first delegate to Congress and the state's first governor. He was lacking in military experience but he had learned Sioux ways during his many years as a fur trader and outdoorsman. Sibley revealed an ambivalent attitude toward the Sioux. He had long been concerned with their welfare and had even predicted war if government policy were not somehow changed to lessen the disastrous impact of white culture on the Indians. Yet in 1862 he not only was willing to fight the Sioux but felt strongly that they should be severely punished. The newly commissioned colonel commanding the Sioux expedition moved his green, ill-sup-

¹"Lincoln's Sioux War Order," in *Minnesota History*, 33:77-79 (Summer, 1952). The letter is in the Edward D. Neill Papers in the Minnesota Historical Society.

plied forces too slowly for his critics, but he did succeed in defeating the Indians and in freeing their 269 white and half-breed prisoners on September 26, 1862.²

Sibley then appointed a military commission to try captured Sioux who had taken part in the uprising. The commission finally sentenced 307 to death, but the president's approval was necessary for execution. Thus, on November 7, Major General John Pope, commander of the new Military District of the Northwest, telegraphed Lincoln the names of 303 condemned Indians (four names were eliminated). On November 10 Lincoln asked Pope to forward "the full and complete record of these convictions. . . . Send all by mail." The president gave the records to two advisers, George C. Whiting and Francis H. Ruggles, to study with the idea of distinguishing between those who had committed murder and those who had merely taken part in battles.³

Lincoln apparently had hoped to escape the chore of selection, for he wrote Joseph Holt, judge advocate general, on December 1: "Three hundred Indians have been sentenced to death in Minnesota by a Military Commission, and execution only waits my action. I wish your legal opinion whether if I should conclude to execute only a part of them, I must myself designate which, or could I leave the designation to some officer on the ground?" The key part of Holt's answer was, "I am quite sure that the power cannot be delegated," so Lincoln continued to pursue the matter himself. Meanwhile he got plenty of advice from Minnesota. Ramsey and Pope, among others, urged the speedy execution of all the condemned prisoners. The growing tension in Minnesota was indicated by Sibley, now head of the Military District of Minnesota, in a letter of December 8 to his counterpart, Brigadier General Washington L. Elliott, commander of the Military District of Wisconsin: "Ask the President to keep secret his decision, whatever it may be, until I have prepared myself as best I can. God knows how much the excitement is increas-



Edward D. Neill in 1861

ing and extending." (Obviously, Sibley had not yet received Lincoln's communication dated December 6.)⁴

It should be pointed out that Lincoln's knowledge of Indian troubles in Minnesota went further back than his communications with Pope after the military commission had made its decisions. In fact, even before the Sioux went on the warpath on August 18, Lincoln sent one of his private secretaries, John G. Nicolay, to Minnesota to help William P. Dole, United States commissioner of Indian affairs, negotiate landcession treaties with Chippewa bands. Nicolay armed himself with a copy of Neill's *History of Minnesota*, presumably to learn about Minnesota Indians, but the Sioux Outbreak prevented any treaty-mak-

² For accounts of Sibley's 1862 expedition and the trials and punishment of the Sioux that followed, see William W. Folwell, *A History of Minnesota*, 2:147-211 (St. Paul, 1961); Kenneth Carley, *The Sioux Uprising of 1862*, 36, 47-51, 55-67 (St. Paul, 1961).

³ Lincoln to Pope, November 10, 1862, in Roy P. Basler, ed., *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln*, 5:493 (New Brunswick, New Jersey, 1953); Folwell, *Minnesota*, 2:197, 209.

⁴ Lincoln to Holt, December 1, 1862, in Basler, *Collected Works*, 5:537. Holt's full answer is given on p. 538. *Minnesota in the Civil and Indian Wars*, 2:291 (St. Paul, 1892).

ing. Nicolay did accompany Dole and others to St. Cloud and later to Fort Ripley and Crow Wing village, where negotiations with the disgruntled Chief Hole-in-the-Day helped keep a Chippewa disturbance from getting out of hand. Nicolay returned to Washington in September and wrote an objective account of "The Sioux War" that was published in *The Continental Monthly* for February, 1863. Presumably Nicolay also discussed Minnesota Indian troubles with Lincoln and perhaps influenced the president toward leniency.⁵

ANOTHER temperate voice to which Lincoln listened was that of Episcopal Bishop Henry B. Whipple. He had written the president the previous March to point out evils in the government's Indian policies. Now he braved the outrage of other Minnesotans in his stand on the uprising. At its end, Whipple visited Lincoln to request justice for the Sioux, and in November, 1862, he sent Lincoln a memorial, signed by several Episcopal leaders, asking for a commission to reform the Indian system. On December 4 Whipple wrote a letter to Lincoln, outlining the causes of the uprising, and another to Sibley, saying "If there is any doubt [about the trials] I know your heart would agree with mine for a searching examination." Sibley defended the military commission in his answer of December 7 and said of the outbreak "that great crime



Henry H. Sibley in 1862

against our common humanity demands an equally great atonement."⁶

Thus Lincoln was well aware of the uprising. He knew, too, that most Minnesotans were bitter against the Sioux, but he also had heard pleas for leniency. As he later wrote to the Senate, he himself was "anxious to not act with so much clemency as to encourage another outbreak, on the one hand; nor with so much severity as to be real cruelty, on the other."⁷

After poring over the military commission records, advisers Whiting and Ruggles reported to Lincoln on December 5. The same day, the United States Senate, on the motion of Minnesota Senator Morton S. Wilkinson, resolved to request information from Lincoln about the trials. On December 6 Lincoln wrote Sibley the famed letter, disappointing to Minnesotans in general, in

⁵ Theodore C. Blegen, ed., *Lincoln's Secretary Goes West: Two Reports by John G. Nicolay on Frontier Indian Troubles 1862*, 9-16, 45 (La Crosse, Wisconsin, 1965); Helen Nicolay, *Lincoln's Secretary: A Biography of John G. Nicolay*, 151-155 (New York, 1949).

⁶ Henry B. Whipple, *Lights and Shadow of a Long Episcopate*, 136-141 (New York, 1900); Whipple to Lincoln, December 4, 1862 (copy), Whipple Papers, in the Minnesota Historical Society; Whipple to Sibley, December 4, 1862, Sibley Papers, in the Minnesota Historical Society; Sibley to Whipple, December 7, 1862, Whipple Papers.

⁷ "Indian Barbarities in Minnesota," 37 Congress, 3 session, *Senate Executive Documents*, no. 7, p. 1 (serial 1149).



John G. Nicolay and Lincoln

which he listed the thirty-nine condemned Indians he had selected for execution from the 303 sentenced by the military commission. This letter in Lincoln's own hand is the one Neill found, hereafter called *Letter A*.⁸

Lincoln then sent a letter directly to Sibley by special messenger rather than through official channels of the Department of the Northwest. But it is now known that the letter which Sibley received was not in Lincoln's handwriting. Apparently Lincoln had kept *Letter A* and sent Sibley a secretary's copy that he signed. This henceforth will be called *Letter B*. The copyist appears to have been the same John G. Nicolay who had visited Minnesota. His knowledge of the uprising, his position as a principal private secretary, and the handwriting all point to him as the man who penned *Letter B*.

When Lincoln answered the Senate's resolution on December 11, he noted that he was enclosing, along with other documents, a "copy" of his order to Sibley and

an abstract of the evidence against the condemned. Probably what he enclosed was *Letter A*, identical in content (but with somewhat different spacing) with *Letter B* sent to Sibley. The Senate had Lincoln's message and enclosures printed and then returned them, so *Letter A* went back to Lincoln at the White House.⁹

AFTER Lincoln's death, his papers were moved to the home of Judge David Davis, administrator of Lincoln's estate, in Bloomington, Illinois, and stored there until 1874. *Letter A*, however, must have been left behind, for Neill found it at the White House "among some useless papers." In 1868, after asking permission of Lincoln's son, Robert Todd Lincoln, Neill sent *Letter A*, the December 11 message, and other enclosures to the Minnesota Historical Society. The society appreciated the value of the Lincoln manuscripts and displayed them proudly. On April 17, 1876, when he was president of the society, Henry H. Sibley wrote: "I hereby certify that the foregoing copies of orders for the execution of the Sioux Indians concerned in the outbreak of 1862, are true transcripts of the originals, which have been donated to the Minnesota Historical Society."¹⁰

At an executive council meeting of the society June 12, 1876, Sibley suggested that

⁸ 37 Congress, 3 session, *Senate Journal*, p. 30 (serial 1148); 37 Congress, 3 session, *Senate Executive Documents*, no. 7, p. 6-9 (serial 1149); Basler, *Collected Works*, 5:542.

⁹ 37 Congress, 3 session, *Senate Executive Documents*, no. 7, p. 2 (serial 1149). Basler, in *Collected Works*, 5:551, states that this message is found as a signed document in the National Archives Record Group (NARG) 46, Senate 37aF2. He does not note the autograph message owned by the Minnesota Historical Society, although the society's *Letter A* is his source for the December 6 order. A search in the files of the Senate committee on Indian affairs failed to turn up this message, nor is it listed in Library of Congress, *Index to the Abraham Lincoln Papers* (Washington, 1960).

¹⁰ Library of Congress, *Index*, vi; Minnesota Historical Society, Meetings of the Executive Council, 6:103, 105. The quotation is in Nathaniel West, *The Ancestry, Life, and Times of Hon. Henry Hastings Sibley, LL.D.*, 288 (St. Paul, 1889).

the "celebrated manuscript order" of President Lincoln be lithographed.¹¹ Letter A facsimiles (hereafter called A-1) were printed and entitled "Facsimile of the Autograph Letter of Abraham Lincoln, President of the U.S., to General Henry H. Sibley of Minnesota." Two copies of facsimile A-1 are now in the Sibley Papers at the Minnesota Historical Society. Sibley inscribed one to his old fur-trading friend, Norman Kittson; the other bears a March 31, 1879, postscript by Stephen Miller, formerly colonel of the Seventh Minnesota Regiment: "I hung thirty-eight of these Indians at Mankato, December 26, 1862." Miller went on to detail how he had difficulty getting rope for the hangings.

Somewhat surprisingly, Sibley apparently forgot that the order he received from Lincoln—Letter B—must have remained with the official military papers. The reconstructed route of Letter B—the Nicolay copy signed by Lincoln—follows. Lincoln sent Letter B to Sibley in St. Paul by special messenger on Monday, December 8. He must also have sent Sibley a copy of the report of Whiting and Ruggles, because the *St. Paul Daily Press* of December 28, 1862, published it along with the December 6 order. Sibley received Letter B on December 15. According to military procedure and his own custom he endorsed it:

"Order of the President of the U.S. directing the execution of thirty-nine condemned Indians." Then it was copied (B-1) by an unidentified person. The copy was designated "Special Order No. 59" and sent to Colonel Miller with a postscript by Sibley: "The order of the President of the United States of which the foregoing is a true copy, will be carried into full effect on the day prescribed." Letter B-1 is in the Sibley Papers. It was donated to the society in 1869 by John K. Arnold, formerly post adjutant at Mankato, who had kept the military papers. On the 1876 facsimile A-1 which Sibley inscribed to Kittson he copied his postscript to Miller.

Sibley, on December 15, requested postponement of the executions to allow Miller time to make arrangements. The president telegraphed on December 16 that the execution date should be changed from December 19 to December 26. On December 27, Sibley telegraphed Lincoln that thirty-eight Indians had been hung (one was reprieved) and that "Everything went off quietly."¹²

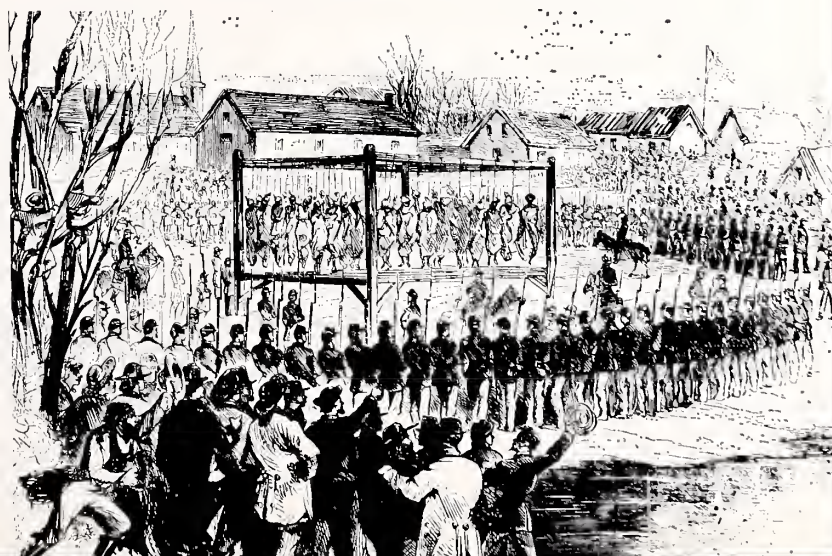
A study of his papers reveals that Sibley was a meticulous man who was conscious of his role in history. Therefore he was careful with the papers that could portray and document that role. Presumably this means official military papers, too. The only official correspondence left in the Sibley Papers is usually labeled "confidential" by the authors, so one can reasonably assume that Letter B—an official order, not a private communication—remained in the

(Text continued on page 124)

¹¹ Minnesota Historical Society, Meetings of the Executive Council, 8:69.

¹² Copies of these telegrams are in the Sibley Papers. The originals are in the Lincoln Papers, Library of Congress. See also Basler, *Collected Works*, 6:6.

This sketch of the execution of thirty-eight Sioux at Mankato, December 26, 1862, was made for Harper's Weekly by a "Mr. Herman of St. Paul."



Executive Mansion,

Washington, December, 6th, 1862.

Brigadier General H. H. Sibley
St. Paul

Minnesota.

Ordered that of the Indians and half-breed, sentenced to be hanged by the Military Commission, composed of Colonel Cook, Lt. Colonel Marshall, also, Captains Grant, Captain Bailey, and Lieutenant Bliss, and lately sitting in Minnesota, you cause to be executed on Friday the nineteenth day of December, instant, the following names, to-wit

"Oe-he-hoo-ne-cha"	No 2.	by the record.
"Wagoo" alias "Plew-doo-tai"	No 4.	by the record.
"My-a-tek-to-wah"	No 5	by the record.
"Kiw-haw-shoon-ko-yag."	No 6	by the record.
"Muz-ga-loom-a-dai."	No 10.	by the record.
"Wah-peg-dai-tai."	No 11.	by the record.
"Ma-ha-haw."	No 12.	by the record.
"Saw-mes-mi."	No 14.	by the record.
"Shi-te-mi-hai."	No 15.	by the record.
"Paw-in-yaw-khai."	No 19.	by the record.
"Do-waw-pai."	No 23.	by the record.
"How-paw."	No 24.	by the record.

"Hanging" Order in Lincoln's Hand

Pictured above and below are the first and last pages of the three-page letter (A) that Lincoln wrote to Sibley, designating the thirty-nine Sioux to be executed. This copy went to the Senate instead of to Sibley and was returned to the White House, where Neill found it. He presented it to the society.

"Hodas-him-hudag."	No 373.	by the record.
"O-yag-toy-a-koo."	No 377.	by the record.
"Mey-hoo-way-wa."	No 382.	by the record.
"Wa-kim-yaw-nai."	No 383	by the record.

The other condemned prisoners you will hold subject to further orders, taking care that they neither escape, nor ^{are} subjected to any unlawful violence.

Abraham Lincoln, Pres-
ident of the United States.

The Same Order in Nicolay's Hand

Executive Mansion,
Washington, December 6th, 1862.

Brigadier-General V. H. Sibley
St. Paul
Minnesota.

Ordered, that of the Indians
and Half-breeds sentenced to be hanged by the Military
Commission, composed of Colonel Crooks, Lt. Colonel Marshall,
all, Captain Grant, Captain Bailey, and Lieutenant Olin,
and lately sitting in Minnesota, you cause to be exe-
cuted on Friday, the nineteenth day of December
instant, the following named, to-wit:

"Ter-he-hdo-ne-cha"	No. 2. by the record.
"Tazoo" alias "Hawdoo-la"	No. 4. by the record.
"Wya-ah-ah-to-wah"	No. 5. by the record.
"Hin-han-shoon-Ko-yag-ma-ne"	No. 6. by the record.
"Muy-za-ron-a-die"	No. 10. by the record.
"Wak-pa-du-ta"	No. 11. by the record.
"Wa-he-hud"	No. 12. by the record.
"Sua-ma-ni"	No. 14. by the record.
"Tu-te-mi-ma"	No. 15. by the record.
"Rda-in-yan-Kua"	No. 19. by the record.
"So-wan-sa"	No. 22. by the record.
"Na-pa-n"	No. 24. by the record.

Here are the first and last pages of the newly discovered copy (B) of Lincoln's order that actually went to Sibley (note the folds). This letter, signed by Lincoln, is in the handwriting of Nicolay and is now in the National Archives. The two copies differ in spellings of some names and in word spacing.

"Nda-hin-hday"	No 375 by the record.
"C-qu-lay-ta-Koo"	No. 377. by the record.
"May-hoo-way-wa."	No 382. by the record.
"We-kin-yan-na"	No 383. by the record.

The other condemned prisoners you
will hold subject to further orders, taking care
that they neither escape, nor are subjected to
any unlawful violence.

Abraham Lincoln, Pres-
ident of the United States.

official files when Sibley was relieved of the command of the Military District of Minnesota in 1865. When the Department of Dakota, which included Minnesota, was established in August, 1867, Letter B would have become a part of the department files.¹³

The Indians whom Lincoln had spared from hanging were imprisoned at Davenport, Iowa, and were still there in 1866. On January 10, 1866, the Reverend Stephen R. Riggs wrote Secretary of the Interior James Harlan, asking for release of the prisoners. His letter was referred to the War Department, and government officials began to search for the records of the military commission and those pertaining to the execution of the Sioux. At this time all material on the Sioux Uprising was pulled together into a consolidated file in the adjutant general's office in Washington.¹⁴ But the record of the military commission and Lincoln's Letter B were missing.¹⁵

In 1892 Letter B finally reached the War Department and was placed in the record and pension office files. There it was stamped "received from the Department of Dakota thro, A.G.O. June 23'd. 1892." In February, 1893, Letter B was placed in the consolidated file of the adjutant general's office, along with a letter that the Catholic missionary, Father Augustin Ravoux, wrote Sibley on December 17, 1862, asking that the Indians be given at least one day's notice of their execution.

Even after 1893 government officials were unsure of the location of the Sioux Uprising material. Another search began in 1897 when Richard F. Pettigrew, chairman of the Senate committee on Indian affairs, requested copies of the papers. Pettigrew eventually was told — erroneously — that everything important had been "published in the Rebellion Records." But this did not include the December 6 order.¹⁶

While confusion reigned in the military archives, Minnesotans remained ignorant of Letter B. In 1967 Minnesota Historical Society staff members began to suspect its

existence while preparing a microfilm edition of the Sibley Papers. The latter contained two facsimiles and a copy of Lincoln's Letter A and these prompted closer scrutiny of the "original" in the Neill Papers. Puzzling questions arose. Why was Letter A not endorsed by Sibley or stamped by a government agency? Why did it look as though it had not been handled or mailed? Most important, why had Neill found it among Lincoln's papers if it had indeed been sent to Sibley? Sibley's military papers should have gone to military archives, not to Lincoln's desk. These questions led to a hunt for a second letter sent to Sibley.

The society then obtained a roll of National Archives microfilm which contained a copy of the consolidated Sioux Outbreak file. With this microfilm, the puzzle could

¹³ *Minnesota in the Civil and Indian Wars*, 1:713; *Checklist of U.S. Public Documents 1789-1909*, 1:1292 (Washington, 1911).

¹⁴ Riggs to Harlan, January 10, 1866, letters received by the adjutant general's office (main series), NARG 94. The Minnesota Historical Society has a copy of file 5 I 1866 on microfilm no. 619, roll 483, filmed in 1965 by the National Archives.

File 5 I 1866 is a consolidated file of Sioux Outbreak material in the adjutant general's office of the War Department. In addition to the December 6 order (Letter B), the file contains material on Sioux prisoners in Iowa, Minnesota militia, and Sisseton and Wahpeton Indian claims. It also has numerous searchers' notes written by persons seeking Sioux Outbreak documents. Papers seem to have been added to the file at various times. Perhaps some were transferred from the record and pension office which in 1892 was charged with keeping records of volunteer troops. Some of the records of Sibley's command are in record and pension office files, and apparently the December 6 letter was there at one time. See Kenneth W. Munden and Henry Putney Beers, *Guide to Federal Archives Relating to the Civil War*, 383 (Washington, 1962).

¹⁵ In Folwell, *Minnesota*, 2:196n, the historian says he and Senator Knute Nelson of Minnesota found the records of the military commission in the Senate files in 1909. A card dated February 1, 1909, in the Folwell Papers, in the Minnesota Historical Society, shows that Nelson and C. H. Hick withdrew the Sioux trial testimony. There is no information on the subject in the Nelson Papers.

¹⁶ Lincoln to Sibley, December 6, 1862; Richard F. Pettigrew to Secretary of War Russell A. Alger, March 10, 1897, file 5 I 1866, NARG 94.

be solved, for there was Letter B that had been sent to Sibley, endorsed by him, and stamped by the adjutant general's office. Further research revealed that Letter A was Lincoln's own draft from which Nicolay made the copy (Letter B).

Now to recapitulate. Lincoln wrote and sent Letter A to the Senate, which returned it to the White House. It was found there

by Neill, who donated it to the Minnesota Historical Society. In 1876 the society made facsimiles (A-1) of Letter A. Letter B, meanwhile, had been sent to Sibley, copied (B-1), and then put with other official military papers in the War Department files. Copy B-1 was donated to the society in 1869 by John K. Arnold. So the Minnesota Historical Society possesses the original Lincoln order (Letter A) — still a valuable document but one which must now share honors with the Nicolay copy signed by Lincoln (Letter B). The order the president sent to Sibley traveled the same route as many another official document — back to Washington.

THE PHOTOGRAPH of Nicolay and Lincoln on page 120 is from Helen Nicolay, *Lincoln's Secretary*; the drawing on page 121 is from *Harper's Weekly*, January 17, 1863; photographs of the Nicolay letter were furnished by the National Archives; all other photographs are in the Minnesota Historical Society's collection.



These photographs, the first published views of Nicolay in Minnesota, were taken in camp at Big Lake in Sherburne County on August 24, 1862. In the over-all scene above, Nicolay aims his gun while his unidentified companions look on. Below, Lincoln's secretary, standing with the gun, looks considerably more informal than he does in the pose with the president on page 120. The man seated on a campstool, although not positively identified, may well be William P. Dole, commissioner of Indian affairs. Both carte-de-visite photographs are from an album once owned by Nicolay and now in the collection of the Lincoln National Life Foundation, Fort Wayne, Indiana, which granted permission to reproduce them here.





One of the earliest pictures of a president in Minnesota is this drawing by W. A. Rogers for Harper's Weekly of October 5, 1878. It shows President Rutherford B. Hayes viewing prize cattle at the Northwestern Fair, Minneapolis, in early September, 1878. Hayes also visited the Minnesota State Fair during a speech-making tour.

Campaigners in Minnesota

IN AN ELECTION YEAR like 1968, presidential aspirants and their followers raise the decibel level of campaign oratory. Here is a roundup of such oratorical visitors to Minnesota in the past — either candidates on the stump or incumbent presidents (in one case a vice-president) trying to keep political fences mended.

At left, William Jennings Bryan (center, bottom row) stood with fellow Democrats in St. Paul on August 31, 1908, while running unsuccessfully for president for the third time. He is flanked by Governor John A. Johnson (left) and former Governor John Lind. President William McKinley (below), on a campaign tour, watched a parade in Minneapolis of the Thirteenth Minnesota Regiment on October 12, 1899. With him in this Library of Congress picture (from left) are Governor Lind, Alexander Ramsey, Cyrus Northrop, and others.





Lincoln Lore

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LINCOLN AND THE INDIANS

At four o'clock on the afternoon of August 21, 1862, Abraham Lincoln's Secretary of War, Edwin M. Stanton, received a telegram from the Governor of Minnesota: "The Sioux on our western border have risen, and are murdering men, women, and children." On the very same afternoon, the Assistant Secretary of War received this telegram from Minnesota's Secretary of State: "A most frightful insurrection of Indians has broken out along our whole frontier. Men, women, and children are indiscriminately murdered; evidently the result of a deep-laid plan, the attacks being simultaneous along our whole border." Five days later, Minnesota's Governor Alexander Ramsey wrote President Lincoln, informing him that "Half the population of the State are fugitives."

These dire reports informed Lincoln of what has come to be called the Sioux Uprising of 1862. This episode has been largely ignored by history books and Lincoln biographies because it took place during the Civil War and was naturally overshadowed by that much greater conflict. Involving over two thousand Sioux warriors and as many as eight hundred white deaths, it was more a war than an uprising and in fact constituted one of the largest Indian wars in United States history. It has even been described as the first phase of that long, sometimes hot, sometimes cold war that would include more famous Indian battles, Custer's Last Stand and the Wounded Knee Massacre. The Sioux Uprising of 1862 included all the usual paraphernalia of war: several pitched battles between Indians and white soldiers, the use of field artillery in battles, a promotion to General's rank for the victorious commander, and even sieges of fortresses and towns.

Although the particular

incident which touched off hostilities between Indians and whites was a senseless murder by four renegade Indians, probably drunk and certainly taking a dare to prove their bravery by killing a white person, the reason the other Indians decided to join the renegades rather than

to turn them over to white authorities were many and varied, and extended back over a long period of time. There were at least three principal reasons:

(1) Treaties made with the Sioux in 1851 and 1858 had seen the Indians cede about twenty-four million acres of land for prices varying from thirteen to thirty cents an acre in exchange for cash payments and annuities to be paid to them over a period of fifty years. These treaties had provisions to pay individual Indians' debts directly to white traders who supplied the Indians with goods, so that the Indians received much less cash than they expected.

(2) The Indians knew, partly because of anti-Republican political speeches, that the state was undermanned because many of the best young white warriors had left to fight the Confederacy. The Indians' fear of white power was as low as it had been for years.

(3) Most important, the 1862 annuity payment was late, and the Indians were hungry. The treaties stipulated that the Indians be paid in gold "so soon as the prairie grass was high enough for pasture," usually about the end of June. In 1862, the appropriation was delayed in Congress. It was also delayed a month by the Treasury Department, which because of the wartime scarcity of gold, debated whether to renege on the promise to pay in gold and pay in Civil War greenbacks instead. It was finally decided to send the gold, which arrived in St. Paul, Minnesota on August 16, a month and a half late and one day after the In-



IDENTIFICATION OF INDIAN MURDERERS IN MINNESOTA BY A BOY WHO HAD ESCAPED FROM THE PRISONS OF SINGAPORE

From the Lincoln National Life Foundation

This picture was on the cover of *Harper's Weekly* on December 20, 1862. It was accompanied by a news story entitled "The Indian Murderers in Minnesota." Though Minnesotans complained that Easterners were sentimental about Indians, they had nothing to complain about in that regard from this New York publication. The artist who drew the sketch described the Indian prisoners he had seen: "They are the most hideous wretches that I have ever seen. I have been in the prisons of Singapore where the Malay pirates are confined—the Dyaks who are the most ferocious and blood-thirsty of their kind—but they are mild and humane in appearance compared to these Sioux warriors." The sketch shows a boy "who had escaped after seeing the murder and outrage of his mother and sisters" accuse a defiant Indian of the crimes with the aid of a Sioux interpreter friendly to the whites. Sioux who were friendly to the whites were scorned as "cut hairs" by their tribal brethren. Note that the Indian with the boy does have shorter hair than the defiant prisoners.

dians went on the warpath. Traders had refused to extend the Indians credit pending the arrival of the annuity payments, telling them that they could eat grass if they were hungry. Among the first whites killed were the men who ran the agency stores, and the man who told the Indians to graze was found dead with grass stuffed in his mouth.

After several murders of civilian farmers, soldiers fought a series of battles with the Indians, and the uprising was quelled by October of 1862. The hostile tribes surrendered, and the federal and state authorities began dealing with the problem of punishment.

A five-man military commission was appointed by the commander in the field, H. H. Sibley, an appointee of the Minnesota Governor, who also held a federal army commission. The work of the five-man commission also had the sanction of the federally appointed commander of the Northwest Indian district, General John Pope. Three hundred ninety-two Indians were selected by the local military authorities (out of some two thousand who surrendered) to stand trial before the military commission. The commission met from September 28 to November 5—over a month—but tried the bulk of the cases, three hundred of them, in just ten days. According to one witness at the trials, a Reverend Riggs, as many as forty cases were tried in one day.

The first man tried was a mulatto named Godfrey, who was found guilty of participating in the uprising and sentenced to death by hanging. However, in exchange for commutation of his death sentence to a ten-years' prison term, he turned state's evidence and fingered some of the rest of the Indians who were found guilty. Of the three hundred ninety-two tried, about three hundred were sentenced to death, and sixteen to prison terms. *Most* of the guilty, however, simply confessed to this charge: "Participation in the murders, outrages and robberies committed by the Sioux tribe. . . . In this, that the said [Indian's name] did join with the participants in the murders and outrages committed by the Sioux tribe of Indians on the Minnesota frontier. . . . particularly in the battles at the Fort, New Ulm, Birch Coolie, and Wood Lake."

The Fort, New Ulm, Birch Coolie, and Wood Lake were pitched battles between Minnesota militia soldiers and Indian warriors. Some of the battles even included former Union soldiers taken prisoner in the Civil War and paroled by the Confederates; their presence was of questionable legality in light of the parole agreements made with the Confederate States and certainly lent the Minnesota outbreak even more of an aura of official warfare. Nevertheless, note the ambiguity of the court's charge. The Indians pleaded guilty to the charge of participation in (among other things) "Murder," but the particular instance was for the most part a pitched battle and not some isolated bushwhacking of a helpless Minnesota farmer. Probably the reason the court could process thirty trials a day was the readiness of the Indians to confess their crimes, and probably that readiness to confess stemmed from a belief that they were confessing to engaging in warfare (to be treated, then, as prisoners of war) and not confessing to murder (to be hanged). Nonetheless, about three hundred were sentenced to hang, and General Pope sent Lincoln a list of the names of the condemned men.

The reason Pope sent the telegram was obvious: neither he nor General Sibley was certain he had the legal authority to hang three hundred Indians. Sibley informed his superior on September 28 that he had seized sixteen Indians and appointed a military commission to try them: "If found guilty they will be immediately executed, although I am somewhat in doubt whether my authority extends quite so far." On the same day, he expressed similar doubts to another Minnesota commander, saying the Indians would be executed if found guilty, "although perhaps it will be a stretch of my authority. If so, necessity must be my justification." On October 7, he informed Pope that twenty had been sentenced to hang. "I have not yet," he explained, "examined the proceedings of the military commission, but although they may not be exactly in form in all the details I shall probably approve them, and hang the villains. . . ." In this remarkable letter Sibley expressed doubts about the propriety of the commission's proceedings on the one hand, and his determination to hang the Indians on the

other. His mind was perhaps made up even *before* he read the court transcripts, and legality obviously was not his primary concern. He had told Pope on September 28 the purpose of the military trial: "An example is . . . imperatively necessary, and I trust you will approve the act, should it happen that some real criminals have been seized and promptly disposed of."

General Pope did endorse the work of the military commission that tried the Indians, but the legality of the proceedings rested perhaps more lightly upon his conscience. Writing to his superior General Henry W. Halleck on October 10, 1862, Pope said of Sibley's captured Indians, "It will be necessary to execute many of them. . . . The example of hanging many of the perpetrators of the late outrages is necessary and will have a crushing effect." Yet three days later he had to write Halleck again to ask what Sibley had asked him: "Do I need further authority to execute Indians condemned by military commission?" It is doubtful whether in Pope's case the military commission was seen as anything other than an extension of the army's military effort to crush the Sioux uprising. While the war still raged in mid-September, Pope wrote Sibley to counsel him against trece:

I think it best to make no arrangement of any kind with them until they are badly punished. . . . I think as we have the men and means now we had best put a final stop to Indian troubles by exterminating or ruining all the Indians engaged in the late outbreak. . . . I do not think it best to close the campaign until the very last moment, even should our men suffer much.

Even after the initial danger to Minnesota citizens had passed, Pope told Stanton: "I apprehend no further danger to the white settlements in Minnesota, but the Indians will be pursued, and, if possible, exterminated in Dakota and Nebraska." Stanton had bigger problems on his mind; he did not want Pope to "detain in your department any more troops than are absolutely necessary for protection from the Indians" because war raged elsewhere in the United States. Pope replied, in essence, that Stanton had no idea how bad things were.

Do not misunderstand the facts. It is not only the Sioux with whom we have to deal. All the Indians—Sioux, Chippewa, and Winnebagoes—are on the verge of outbreak along the whole frontier.

The Sioux war was finished (Sibley's trial began three days after this letter was written), and the Chippewas and Winnebagoes had not joined the Sioux and were not likely to now that the Sioux had faced military reverses. On the day the trials began, Pope told Sibley his view of Indians:

There will be no peace in this region by virtue of treaties and Indian faith. It is my purpose utterly to exterminate the Sioux if I have the power to do so and even if it requires a campaign lasting the whole of next year. . . . They are to be treated as maniacs or wild beasts, and by no means as people with whom treaties or compromises can be made.

Clearly, for Pope the trial was not an attempt to find justice but another form of warfare.

To Pope's telegram informing him of the proposed executions, President Lincoln sent this reply on November 10, 1862:

Your despatch giving the names of three hundred Indians condemned to death, is received. Please forward, as soon as possible, the full and complete record of these convictions. And if the record does not fully indicate the more guilty and influential, of the culprits, please have a careful statement made on these points and forwarded to me.

What is remarkable about Lincoln's reply is the evidence of the speed with which he apparently arrived at a decision not to hang all the Indians listed in Pope's telegram. Already Lincoln wanted to make distinctions among the condemned.

It is all the more remarkable because Lincoln probably had no official report on the nature of the trials (though he may have known something about them from personal interviews with people from Minnesota in Washington). Critics of the trials claimed they were hasty. In later years, Minnesotans would defend the trials. Charles E. Flandrau, who was a lawyer and a militia commander in

the Minnesota Sioux Uprising of 1862, wrote over twenty years after the event that the trial was a good one because of "the fact that the Hon. Isaac V. D. Heard, an experienced lawyer of St. Paul, who had been for many years the prosecuting attorney of Ramsey county [and] was thoroughly versed in criminal law, was on the staff of Col. Sibley, and was by him appointed recorder of the court."

What Lincoln thought of the procedural aspects of the military commission's work is not known precisely, but the nature of much of the information and advice he received in the case is known. To review this information and advice is to become even more startled at Lincoln's reply to Pope and at his rather lengthy deliberation on the case (Lincoln's decision was not announced until December).

The voices from Minnesota that Lincoln heard were almost uniformly in favor of immediate execution. General Pope advised the President "that the only distinction between the culprits is as to which of them murdered most people or violated most young girls. All of them are guilty of these things in more or less degree." Most of the advice Lincoln got from the field, in fact, was more a threat than advice. Pope said that if the Indians were not executed, there would be no preventing the wrath of the people of Minnesota from resulting in "the indiscriminate massacre of all the Indians—old men, women, and children." The Governor of Minnesota sent Lincoln the same advice-as-veiled-threat: "I hope the execution of every Sioux Indian condemned by the military court will be at once ordered. It would be wrong upon principle and policy to refuse this. Private revenge would on all this border take the place of official judgment on these Indians."

Lincoln was a politician, sensitive to public opinion. The people of St. Paul, for example, were among the voters on whom Lincoln's career depended. They sent the President a memorial, requesting that Lincoln should perform his duty to execute the Indians and expressing a hope (which was actually another threat) that the friends of those "foully murdered by those Indian devils, will not be compelled to take vengeance into their own hands, as they assuredly will if Government shall fail in its duty." Lincoln received an address also from the politically powerful men of the state. From one senator and both representatives Lincoln received this advice: "These Indians are called by some prisoners of war. There was no war about it. It was wholesale robbery, rape, murder. . . . let the Law be executed"; otherwise "the outraged people of Minnesota will dispose of those wretches without law."

It may be objected that these were the voices of passionate and emotional partisans, too close to the event to give impartial advice of the sort a President needs. Lincoln had a trusted personal advisor on the scene too. In July of 1862, before the Sioux uprising broke out, Lincoln sent one of his two private secretaries, John G. Nicolay, to Minnesota to help conclude a treaty with the Chippewa Indians. Since Nicolay was in Minnesota at the time of the Sioux outbreak, Lincoln was able to get first-hand information from a personal associate on the scene.

John Nicolay's daughter, Helen, who was also his biographer, made this evaluation of John Nicolay's views on Indians: "My father entertained no sentimental illusions about the North American Indians. He had grown up too near frontier times in Illinois to regard them as other than cruel and savage enemies whose moral code (granted they had one) was different from that of the whites." To judge from Nicolay's reports to the President, one would have to say that Helen knew her father well. In August, he wrote the President, telling him that "the massacre of innocent white settlers has been fearful." Nicolay's opinion in a letter to the Secretary of War was this: "As against the Sioux it must be a war of extermination." It seems unlikely that the advice of Lincoln's personal observer on the scene differed from that of Pope, Governor Ramsey, or the citizens of St. Paul.

Lincoln also got legal advice. The legal questions were extremely complex and confusing, as is evident from the doubts on the part of the very man who set up the military tribunal to sentence the Indians as to whether he had the authority to carry out the sentences. It is

not known on how many points Lincoln sought or received advice, but it is known that he got one very important piece of advice. On December 1, he wrote the Judge Advocate General, who was the highest legal authority in the U.S. Army, "whether if I should conclude to execute only a part of them, I must myself designate which, or could I leave the designation to some officer on the ground?" The Judge Advocate General informed the President that the executive pardoning power could not be delegated: Lincoln must himself choose. This piece of advice was important since it is hard to imagine what officer in the field could be found to make any discriminate choices among the Indians, all viewed simply as murderers and devils.

Lincoln also received information from what might be called the Indian experts in the field, in particular, from the Indian Commissioner, William P. Dole, and from the Episcopal Bishop of Minnesota, one Henry B. Whipple, who had always taken a special interest in the Indians of his diocese. Indian Commissioner Dole gave legal advice: to execute the Indians would be "an indiscriminate punishment of men who have laid down their arms and surrendered themselves as prisoners." He thought they should be treated as prisoners of war and not as murderers.

Bishop Whipple gave Lincoln moral advice based on three years' experience with Indian missions. Forty years old at the time of the Sioux uprising, Whipple had come to his Minnesota episcopate from upper New York state, but he had been educated in part at Oberlin Collegiate Institute in Ohio. In his autobiography, *Lights and Shadows of a Long Episcopate*, Whipple heaped special praise on Charles Grandison Finney, president of Oberlin, for his "kindness and consideration . . . and his loving interest in my career." Perhaps it was from Finney that Whipple derived his underlying faith that religion was a matter of the heart rather than the head. It was this faith that allowed Whipple to ignore the



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John Pope (1822-1892) was born in Kentucky and educated at West Point. After service in the Mexican War, he was stationed for a while in Minnesota. He would return to Minnesota after his defeat by Confederate forces in the Second Battle of Manassas; thus his command of the Department of the Northwest was a way of denying him field command. Most short biographical sketches of Pope skip over his role in the Sioux Uprising of 1862, saying only that he served "creditably." Though he was born in the same state that Lincoln was, the two did not share the same attitudes towards Indians.

advice of "good men . . . to have nothing to do with Indian Missions, on the ground that the red men were a degraded, perishing race." He always pitched his message in "simple language in order to reach the heart."

Whipple was elected bishop of Minnesota in 1859, and began a long career of work in behalf of the American Indian almost immediately. After his very first visit to Indian country in 1859, Whipple wrote a long letter to President James Buchanan, detailing the evils of the government's Indian policy and recommending reform. He told Buchanan that the principal "curse of the Indian country is the fire-water which flows throughout its borders." Six factors in the government's policy either encouraged or failed to discourage the liquor traffic on the reservations:

First, the policy of our Government has been to treat the red man as an equal. Treaties are then made. The annuities are paid in gross sums annually; from the Indian's lack of providence and the influence of traders, a few weeks later every trace of the payment is gone. Second, the reservations are scattered and have a widely extended border of ceded lands. As the Government has no control over the citizens of the state, traffic is carried on openly on the border. Third, the Indian agents have no police to enforce the laws of Congress, and cannot rely upon the officers elected by a border population to suppress a traffic in which friends are interested. Fourth, the army, being under

the direction of a separate department, has no definite authority to act for the protection of the Indians. Fifth, if arrests are made, the cases must be tried before some local state officer, and often the guilty escape. Sixth, as there is no distinction made by the Government between the chief of temperate habits and the one of intemperate, the tribe loses one of the most powerful influences for good,—that of pure official example.

The reforms that this indictment suggested were obvious. Whipple wanted to change the whole basis of United States relations with the Indians so that they would be not the equals but the "wards" of the government. He thought the government should "occupy a paternal character" and give the Indians "all supplies in kind as needed" rather than cash which could be spent on liquor. The federal commissioners should have authority to try violations of Indian laws, to prosecute and enforce laws against liquor traders, and to dismiss intemperate chiefs. The Indians should be more concentrated in certain areas and should be encouraged to own their own farms.

Although Bishop Whipple was a self-described "Democrat of the conservative school," he did not confine his efforts to Democratic Presidents. Several months before the Sioux outbreak in Minnesota, Whipple wrote President Lincoln about the problems of United States Indian policy. On March 6, 1862, the Bishop wrote to "ask only justice for a wronged and neglected race." By this time, Whipple had broadened his criticism, laying the blame on other factors besides demon rum. The sale of Indian lands, he claimed, left the wild man without the hunting grounds necessary for his economic livelihood and weakened the authority of the chiefs over the tribes. The government's Indian agents got their jobs as political plums rather than as rewards for merit and expertise in dealing with Indians.

Whipple's letter dealt with the broadest assumptions behind Indian policy:

The first question is, can these red men become civilized? I say, unhesitatingly, *yes*. The Indian is almost the only heathen man on earth who is not an idolater. In his wild state, he is braver, more honest, and virtuous than most heathen races. He has warm home affections and strong love of kindred and country.

Whipple claimed that British policies towards the Indians were much more successful than the United States's and revealed "some marked instances of their capability of civilization." There was a sad contrast between Canada, where "you will find there are hundreds of civilized and Christian Indians," and "this side of the line," where "there is only degradation."

Whipple's recommendations were based on the same idea he had suggested in 1860 to President Buchanan. The government should frame its instructions to its agents "so that the Indian shall be the ward of the Government. They cannot live without law. We have broken up, in part, their tribal relations, and they must have something in their place." Administrations had changed since Whipple's letter to Buchanan, and the Indian agency appointments had changed too. He was more impressed than before that the office of Indian agent should not "become one of mere political favoritism." He insisted again that agricultural pursuits should be encouraged: "the Government ought to aid him in building a house, in opening his farm, in providing utensils and implements of labor." In particular, "his home should be conveyed to him by a patent, and be inalienable." Schools should be ample enough "to receive all children who desire to attend." "As it is," the Bishop complained, "with six thousand dollars appropriated for the Lower Sioux for some seven years past, I doubt whether there is a child at the lower agency who can read who has not been taught by our missionary." Though he did say the government employees should be "temperate" men, conspicuously absent from Whipple's letter was the previous emphasis on alcohol as the root of the problem. Gone completely was his proposal that intemperate chiefs be dismissed by the government. He had become concerned with what *drove* the Indians to drink more than with the mere availability of alcohol.

(To Be Continued)



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Hole-in-the-Day was a Chippewa and not a Sioux (the two tribes were traditional enemies, in fact), but he was responsible for bringing Lincoln's private secretary John G. Nicolay to Minnesota in 1862. This photograph, taken in Minnesota at the time of the Sioux uprising, comes from an album once owned by John Nicolay and now in the possession of the Lincoln Library and Museum. Nicolay wrote an article on Hole-in-the-Day which appeared in *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* in 1863. It is reprinted in Theodore C. Blegen, ed., *Lincoln's Secretary Goes West: Two Reports by John G. Nicolay on Frontier Indian Troubles 1862* (La Crosse, Wis.: Sumac Press, 1965).



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LINCOLN AND THE INDIANS (Cont.)

The effect of Whipple's letter on Abraham Lincoln is unknown, but Lincoln did at least acknowledge the letter. Writing on March 27, 1862, the President stated that he had "commended the matter of which it treats to the special attention of the Secretary of the Interior." This letter may have had a significant effect on subsequent events because of its timeliness. Pleas to show mercy to the convicted Indians eight or nine months later may have seemed less to be instances of special pleading and more to be admonitions to a forewarned government. In August, Whipple's letter of March 6 could be seen as a prophecy of trouble and one that laid the blame not on the wanton passions of the red man but upon the inept policies of the white.

Whipple had good connections in Washington because General Henry W. Halleck was his cousin. Through Halleck he gained a personal audience with President Lincoln in the Autumn of 1862 after the Sioux uprising

occurred. What is known of the meeting comes entirely from Whipple's autobiography:

General Halleck went with me to the President, to whom I gave an account of the outbreak, its causes, and the suffering and evil which followed in its wake. Mr. Lincoln had known something of Indian warfare in the Black Hawk War. He was deeply moved. He was a man of profound sympathy, but he usually relieved the strain upon his feelings by telling a story. When I had finished he said:—

"Bishop, a man thought that monkeys could pick cotton better than negroes could because they were quicker and their fingers smaller. He turned a lot of them into his cotton field, but he found that it took two overseers to watch one monkey. It needs more than one honest man to watch one Indian Agent."

Whipple's knowledge of Lincoln's more profound reaction was second or third hand:



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The photograph shows John G. Nicolay (standing) in Minnesota on August 24, 1862. The Minnesota Historical Society has tentatively identified the man seated as Indian commissioner William P. Dole. Both men gave Lincoln information about the Sioux uprising.

A short time after this, President Lincoln, meeting a friend from Illinois, asked him if their old friend, Luther Dearborn, had not moved to Minnesota. Receiving an affirmative answer, he said: "When you see Lute, ask him if he knows Bishop Whipple. He came out here the other day and talked with me about the rascality of this Indian business until I felt it down to my boots. If we get through this war, and I live, *this Indian system shall be reformed!*"

Anyone with any acquaintance with Lincoln literature knows to be suspicious of anecdotes which come second hand, especially if one of the parties involved remains nameless in the anecdote. It should be noted that Whipple reported a much more non-committal response from the President's personal interview. Nevertheless, as will be argued later, there is some evidence that Whipple's efforts may have had some effect on President Lincoln.

As Whipple suggested when he said that Lincoln had had some experience himself with Indian warfare, the personal factors in Lincoln's decision should not be ignored. There was little in Lincoln's personal background to lead one to believe that his opinions of Indians would have differed from John Nicolay's. If Nicolay had lived too close to Illinois's frontier days to have any "sentimental illusions" about Indians, Lincoln, who was older than Nicolay, had lived even closer to Illinois's frontier era. In fact, Lincoln had enlisted in the Illinois militia in 1832 to fight in the Black Hawk War. Lincoln had marched, fought off mosquitoes, had his horse stolen, and in general endured the hardships of a military campaign (as both a captain and a private), though he never saw an Indian or fired a shot. Still, his response when Indian troubles had brewed had been to join up and fight.

However innocuous Lincoln's personal experiences with Indian warfare had been (and later he would make fun of them in Congress), there was a reason why he might have harbored quite a grudge against Indians. Lincoln knew very little about his personal family background and does not seem to have cared about it a great deal, but one thing he did know and mentioned repeatedly: his grandfather on the Lincoln side had been killed by Indians in 1784. Lincoln blamed this for the shortcomings he found in his father Thomas. Thus in an autobiographical sketch he wrote in 1860, Lincoln said: "Thomas, the youngest son, and father of the present subject, by the early death of his father, and very narrow circumstances of his mother, even in childhood was a wandering laboring boy, and grew up literally without education. He never did more in the way of writing than to bunglingly sign his own name." In a way, Lincoln blamed the Indians for making an orphan of

his father and therefore depriving him of a proper education and upbringing. Moreover, Lincoln knew that the Indians were capable of murder, for his grandfather had not died in battle. As Abraham Lincoln himself explained, "he was killed by Indians, not in battle, but by stealth, when he was laboring to open a farm in the forest."

Yet the decision Lincoln made reflected little of the advice he received and none of his personal background. Lincoln announced his decision in the case of the condemned Sioux Indians to Congress this way:

Anxious to not act with so much clemency as to encourage another outbreak on the one hand, nor with so much severity as to be real cruelty on the other, I caused a careful examination of the records of trials to be made, in view of first ordering the execution of such as had been proved guilty of violating females. Contrary to my expectations, only two of this class was found. I then directed a further examination, and a classification of all who were proven to have participated in *massacres*, as distinguished from participation in *battles*. This class numbered forty and included the two convicted of female violation.

As a result of Lincoln's decision, only thirty-eight Indians were hanged; the rest were kept prisoner a while and some were eventually pardoned.

Lincoln had delegated the sifting and winnowing task to George C. Whiting and Francis H. Ruggles. Although Lincoln's message had claimed to distinguish essentially between Indians guilty of rape and murder and Indians who had engaged in military battles, the final decision apparently retained something of the original desideratum Lincoln used when replying to Pope's telegram. Some of the thirty-eight condemned Indians were more ringleaders than murderers. In the list he presented to Congress, for example, appeared this particular charge against Rda-in-yan-kna: "Took a prominent part in all the battles, including the attack on New Ulm, leading and urging the Indians forward, and opposing the giving up of the captives when it was proposed by others." Still another, Hay-pee-don, may have been sentenced to death for mutilating a corpse and firing "many shots at the fort."

Edmund S. Morgan points out in a recent American history textbook, *The National Experience*, that Indian victories in American history are generally known as massacres. When Lincoln distinguished between Indian massacres and Indian battles, he made a distinction that Americans did not often make at that time, and, as Mr. Morgan reminds us, that Americans still have trouble making. Moreover, Lincoln made the distinction in de-



From the Lincoln National Life Foundation

Another photograph taken in Minnesota during Nicolay's visit there in 1862 shows the President's secretary taking some shooting practice. To judge from this picture and the weapons Nicolay carried in the picture on the first page, one would have to say Nicolay apparently felt he was supposed to look the part of a rugged frontiersman. Whether he also felt compelled to adopt the frontiersmen's attitudes toward Indians is an interesting question. However, Nicolay's account of "The Sioux War," which appeared in *The Continental Monthly* in February of 1863, was more temperate in its recommendations for future Indian policy than General Pope's advice and clearly discounted the idea that the war had been planned in advance by the Indians.

fiance of most of the information from the field (which had informed him only of murders, rapes, and outrages) and most of the advice from witnesses, influential politicians, and even a close personal advisor.

Two factors probably influenced Lincoln. Perhaps the fact that the Indian uprising occurred during the Civil War served to clarify the legal issues involved. Certainly Lincoln was thinking about the characteristics and consequences of a legal state of war. He treated the Civil War as both a war and a rebellion. Had Lincoln treated it strictly as a rebellion, he would have hanged all Confederate prisoners and he could not have declared a naval blockade recognizable in international law. Had Lincoln treated it strictly as a war, it would have meant that the Confederacy was a legal belligerent government or perhaps a nation, a position that would have utterly undermined the administration's ideological basis for the war. Moreover, Congress never declared war. The position of the Lincoln administration was not exactly consistent, but it was one that permitted enough use of the war power to win the war and free the slaves without at the same time unleashing incredible atrocities.

The Sioux outbreak was a similarly complex legal situation. On the one hand, it resembled a war between independent nations. In 1862, Indians were not United States citizens. They were dealt with by treaties just as any sovereign foreign nation was dealt with. Thus Indians who fought in pitched battles with white soldiers were perhaps entitled to the status of prisoners of war rather than traitors or murderers. On the other hand, Congress did not declare war, and Indian tribes were not sovereign states in the same sense that France and England were because they were forbidden from entering into treaties with other foreign nations besides the United States. John Marshall had said in a Supreme Court decision in 1831 that the Cherokee Nation, although it was a "State," was not a "foreign State" but a "domestic dependent nation." In a way, Lincoln treated the Sioux in a constitutionally inconsistent way, much as he treated the Confederate States in a constitutionally inconsistent way, in order to gain deterrence of future Sioux outbreaks without at the same time causing atrocities.

Charles E. Flandrau, although he disagreed with the wisdom of Lincoln's actions, thought (many years after the event) that the pressures of Civil War politics did have a great deal to do with Lincoln's decision.

I have my own views also of the reasons for the action of the general Government in eliminating from the list of the condemned all but thirty-nine [one of these was later reprieved, so that thirty-eight were hanged]. It was not because these thirty-nine were more guilty than the rest, but because we were engaged in a great civil war, and the eyes of the world were upon us. Had these three hundred men been executed, the charge would undoubtedly have been made by the South that the North was murdering prisoners of war, and the authorities at Washington knew full well that the other nations of the earth were not capable of making the proper discrimination. . . .

Flandrau also mentioned the notion that was prevalent in Minnesota that Lincoln's mind had been poisoned by a lot of sickly sentimentalists from the East. Flandrau believed Lincoln got this kind of advice, but he did not say that Lincoln was heeding it in his decision in December of 1862. As Flandrau put it, "While this court martial was in session, the news of its proceedings reached the Eastern cities, and a great outcry was raised that Minnesota was contemplating a dreadful massacre of Indians. Many influential bodies of well-intentioned but ill-informed people besieged President Lincoln to put a stop to the proposed executions." A much more capable Minnesota historian than Flandrau, writing over thirty years later than Flandrau wrote, apparently put some stock in these same provincial fears, writing with a sneer: "No sooner was it known that President Lincoln had taken the disposition of the condemned Indians into his own hands than he was inundated with 'appeals': appeals for mercy, on the one hand, from friends of the Indian who never had seen one, from people opposed to the death penalty, and from those who regarded the convicts as prisoners of war." In fact, the existence of these appeals remains

largely unverified, and Abraham Lincoln did not submit them to the Senate, when it asked for information about the case, though he submitted, for example, the quite unsentimental appeal from the citizens of St. Paul.

One exception, of course, would be the advice that Lincoln received from Bishop Whipple, whom the people of Minnesota regarded as an "enthusiastic tenderfoot" in Indian matters. The principal evidence for Whipple's influence is second and third hand, but there are some indications from sources other than the Bishop's own autobiography that Lincoln may have been influenced from that quarter.

In his Annual Message to Congress of December 1, 1862, Lincoln had occasion to mention the Indian troubles in Minnesota. He admitted that "How this outbreak was induced is not definitely known," and he informed Congress that the "people of that State manifest much anxiety for the removal of the tribes beyond the limits of the state." Yet, in conclusion he added, "I submit for your especial consideration whether our Indian system shall not be remodelled. Many wise and good men have impressed me with the belief that this can be profitably done." Of course, his message was silent on the type of reform he proposed, but the Indian war did suggest reform in the Indian system to him. A year later, Lincoln's Annual Message carried another appeal for reform, this time with a clue to the nature of reform he desired:

Sound policy and our imperative duty to these wards of the government demand our anxious and constant attention to their material well-being, to the progress in the arts of civilization, and, above all, to that moral training which, under the blessing of Divine Providence, will confer upon them the elevated and sanctifying influences, the hopes and consolation of the Christian faith.

I suggested in my last annual message the propriety of remodelling our Indian system. Subsequent events have satisfied me of its necessity. The details set forth in the report of the Secretary evince the urgent need for immediate legislative action.

The key lies in Lincoln's use of the term "wards" to describe the Indians' status *vis-a-vis* the United States government. It was basically a reformer's word. Moreover, it was a word which described perfectly the relationship to the Indians which Bishop Whipple desired the government to assume. He argued for a more paternalistic government, a government which would not treat the Indians as "equals," a government which would furnish them with supplies in kind but could not trust them to spend money on their own, and a government that would treat them kindly and fairly. In short, he wanted Indians to become wards of the government. Whipple's letter to Buchanan used the very word, suggesting, "First, whether, in future, treaties cannot be made so that the Government shall occupy a paternal character, treating the Indians as their wards."

When Lincoln addressed a group of Indian chiefs directly in Washington in March of 1863, he avoided saying that the Indians should adopt the white men's way of life, but he did tell them "what has made the difference in our way of living" so that the whites were "numerous and prosperous." It was agriculture. When pressed for advice, he said, "I can only say that I can see no way in which your race is to become as numerous and prosperous as the white race except by living as they do, by the cultivation of the earth." Whipple's recommendation to Lincoln had urged that the Indians be granted individual lots of land held as private property and that they be supplied the tools and training to become successful farmers.

Indian reformers later in the century would urge many of the same things. G. P. Manypenny's landmark book about Indian reform was, significantly, entitled *Our Indian Wards* (1879). Henry Whipple went on to write a preface to Helen Hunt Jackson's famous treatment of the history of the United States' dealings with Indians, *A Century of Dishonor* (1881). Whether Lincoln would have joined Helen Hunt Jackson's crusade for the Indian had he lived, can only be a matter of speculation.

One thing, however, seems clear. Lincoln did earn a

reputation for being "soft" on Indians. Charles Flandrau said so in 1891:

An Indian never forgets what he regards an injury, and never forgives an enemy. It is my opinion that all the troubles that have transpired since the liberation of these Indians, with the tribes inhabiting the Western plains and mountains, have grown out of the counsels of these savages. The only proper course to have pursued with them, when it was decided not to hang them, was to have exiled them to some remote post,—say, the Dry Tortugas,—where communication with their people would have been impossible. . . .

Flandrau blamed Lincoln's clemency for all the Sioux troubles that ensued further west after the Civil War.

Indeed, Lincoln gained his reputation at least as early as 1864. The memoirs of an Indian fighter named Eugene F. Ware mention this conversation about some Indian troubles in the West in 1864:

During the day Lieutenant Rankin came and rode with me, and we talked over the Indian council. Rankin said the General [named Mitchell] was angry and mortified over it; that if it had been successful it would have been a great achievement and much to his reputation and credit; that it was not Mitchell's idea, but that a lot of preachers had got at President Lincoln and insisted that the preachers should have the control of the Indian situation, and that the various sects should divide the control among themselves—that is to say, the Methodists should have so much jurisdiction, the Catholics so much, the Baptists so much, and so on, and that they were worrying Lincoln a good deal, and that they wanted him to take immediate steps to have an universal Indian peace between all the Indians. Lincoln yielded to much of it and had sent for Mitchell and told him to take up the matter and see what he could do.

Friends of the Indian and Indian fighters alike seem to have agreed that on the Indian question the preachers "got at President Lincoln."

Lincoln's opinions on Indians reached almost mythic proportions by 1932, when The American Missionary Association published a pamphlet by one George W. Hinman, entitled "Lincoln Sunday, February 14, 1932: Lin-

coln and the Indians." The pamphlet was a script for a responsive reading for a worship service. The American Missionary Association ran schools and churches for Negroes and Indians, and the Superintendent was to ask his pupils, "When did the Dakota [Sioux] Indians in large numbers turn from their pagan religion to Christianity?" The pupils were to reply, "Only after the Minnesota Massacre in 1862, when four hundred Indians were imprisoned in the Federal Prison at Mankato, Minn., and condemned to death for their part in the attack on white settlers." The service continued:

Supt.—What did President Lincoln do for the Dakota Indian prisoners?

Pupils—In the dark years of 1862, the second year of the Civil War, when the future of the Union was very uncertain and Lincoln was pondering the question of the emancipation of the slaves as a war measure, he took his valuable time to study the reports of the military trials of the four hundred Dakota Indians accused of sharing in the Minnesota Massacre.

Supt.—And what was his decision?

Pupils—After going over all the evidence he decided that only thirty-eight Indians, positively known to have engaged in actual massacres, should be hung. . . .

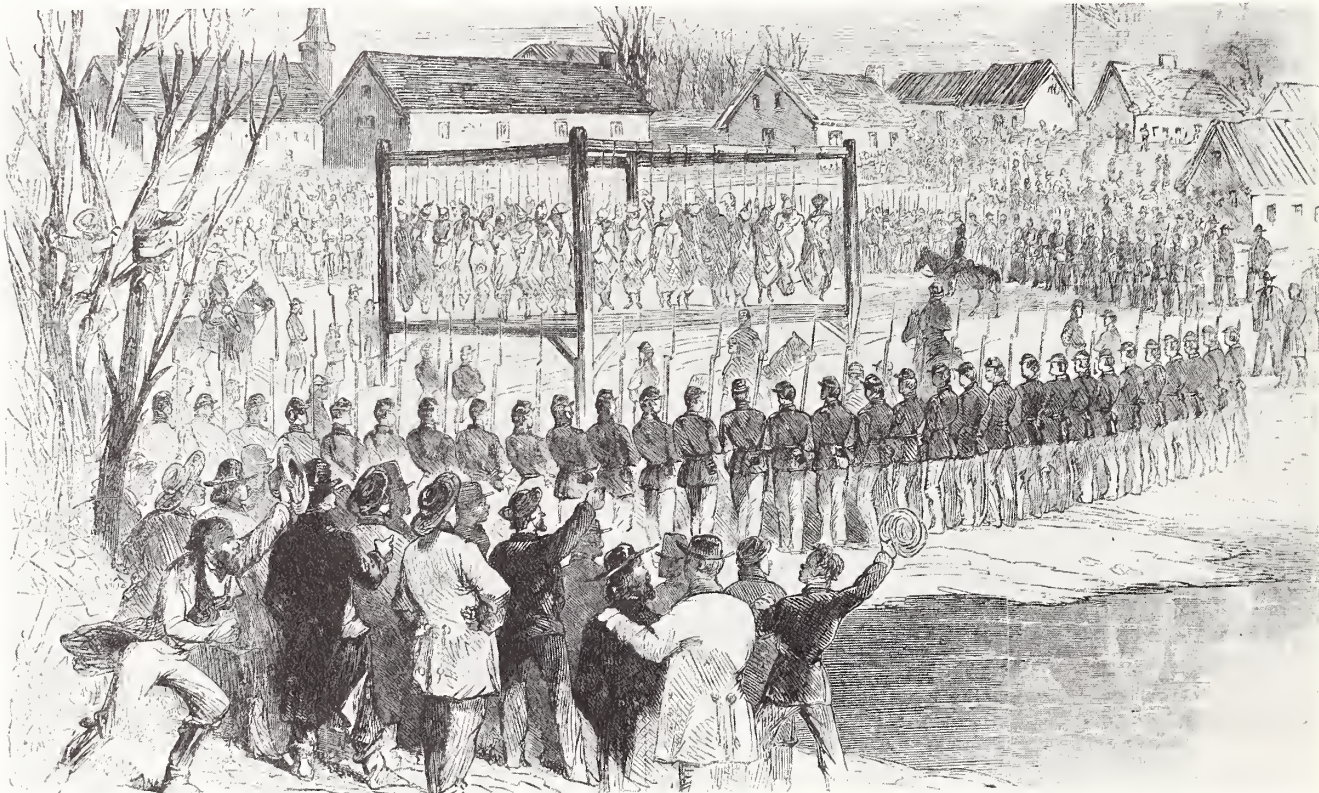
Supt.—What did Lincoln say about the Indians in a message to Congress?

Pupils—He advocated a revision of the whole government Indian service. He resisted the appeals for drastic action against the Indians, objecting to a "severity which would be real cruelty."

Supt.—What was one of Lincoln's famous statements, which he applied to Indians in the same spirit as to those of his own race?

Pupils—"With malice toward none and charity for all."

The missionaries erred in regard to the number of Indians condemned and saved, but they, and perhaps some of their pupils as well, did not forget what many historians have, Lincoln's actions towards the Minnesota Sioux Indians in 1862.



From the Lincoln National Life Foundation

This picture of the hanging in Mankato appeared in *Harper's Weekly* on January 17, 1863. The large number of soldiers were present to restrain the crowds. Note that the observers wave their hats as though celebrating.



Lincoln Lore

August, 1978

Bulletin of the Louis A. Warren Lincoln Library and Museum. Mark E. Neely, Jr., Editor.
Mary Jane Hubler, Editorial Assistant. Published each month by the
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Number 1686

Pale-faced People and Their Red Brethren

It was inevitable. The civil rights revolution led to a spate of works on Lincoln and the Negro. When the civil rights movement spilled over into crusades for other kinds of people, Lincoln scholarship could not be far behind. The American Indian movement now has its angry equivalent of Lerone F. Bennett's "Was Abe Lincoln a White Supremacist?" (*Ebony*, XXIII [Feb., 1968]). David A. Nichols's *Lincoln and the Indians: Civil War Policy and Politics* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1978) is less journalistic and more scholarly than Bennett's uncompromising attack on Lincoln, but, fundamentally, it makes the same unreasonable demand that Abraham Lincoln live up to this century's definition of humanitarianism.

The chapter titles constitute the headings of an indictment: "The Indian System: 'A Sink of Iniquity,'" "Lincoln and the Southern Tribes: 'Our Great Father at Washington Has Turned Against Us,'" "Indian Affairs in Minnesota: 'A System of Wholesale Robberies,'" "Lincoln and Removal: 'A Disagreeable Subject,'" "The President and the Reformers: 'This Indian System Shall Be Reformed,'" "The Failure of Reform: 'The Do Nothing Policy Here Is Complete,'" "Concentration and Militarism," and "Lincolanian Attitudes Toward Indians: 'A Dying Race . . . Giving Place to Another Race with a Higher Civilization.'" The tone of the book is indignant, and the message, as with almost all modern books on Indian policy in the nineteenth century, is depressing.

What Nichols proves

and what he laments are two different things. The record of the United States government in Indian policy during the Civil War was deplorable as usual. Lincoln's culpability for this record, however, is not so clearly delineated.

No book in the field yields so clear a view of the developments in Indian affairs during the Civil War. There were really several different Indian problems, each of which ran its course to a different unhappy ending. The Southern tribes (or Five Civilized Tribes), resident by the time of the Civil War in Indian Territory (present-day Oklahoma), were peculiar in that they held Negro slaves and were close to the Confederacy geographically. Despite treaty obligations to protect the tribes on their reservations, the United States abandoned the tribes, who made alliances of convenience with the Confederate States of America. Loyal Indians led by Creek Chief Opothleyaholo fled to Kansas, where they lived the miserable life customary for all war refugees.

Late in 1861, the administration decided to retake the reservations, and by January of 1862, it was decided to use Indians as soldiers in the campaign. Nichols notes that this decision did not have the far-reaching effect of leading to citizenship for Indians that the decision to use Negroes as soldiers would have. He does not give a full analysis of the reasons for the difference in result, but speculation on the subject is illuminating. In the first place, Indians were not vitally and logically linked to the Civil War, as Negroes were. The Indians



From the Louis A. Warren
Lincoln Library and Museum

FIGURE 1. Creek Chief Opothleyaholo in a youthful portrait painted long before he led loyal Indians to Kansas in the Civil War.

played the same role that they had played in earlier power struggles on the North American Continent; they were pawns used by the greater powers. From the Indians' perspective, they played their accustomed roles in dangerous diplomacy, trying to pick the side that would win or to maintain neutrality. In the second place, Indians, as always, were divided and hence could be used to fight each other. "These Indians," General Halleck ordered on April 5, 1862, "can be used only against Indians or in defense of their own territory and homes." Using Indians for war was akin to fighting fire with fire. When Indians entered the fray, the conflict was no longer civilized warfare. The fact that they could fight each other instead of white men kept their warfare on the plane of savagery and did not lead to the privileges accorded white soldiers and veterans. Third, there were not enough of them to worry about, and it was widely assumed that their numbers were diminishing towards extinction. There was little need to be concerned about the future of the Indian in American society; he had no future.

The Battle of Pea Ridge, Arkansas, in which a number of Indians fought for the Confederacy, was a defeat for the Confederacy which caused an abandonment of Indian territory. The loyal refugee problem was not solved, however, since the government had to pay to send them back and pay to protect them once they were there. In 1864, the government removed the refugees from Kansas, too late for planting season.

A separate Indian problem was the Sioux uprising in Minnesota in 1862. Nichols devotes about one third of his book to this famous episode in Lincoln's Indian relations. The virtue of his account lies not only in its thorough grounding in manuscript sources but also in its treatment of the Sioux uprising, not as an individual and spectacular event, but as a part of the Lincoln administration's continuing development. Nichols's account is particularly useful in showing the resolution of Indian problem after the famous hangings in Mankato, Minnesota, the day after Christmas, 1862 (see *Lincoln Lore* Numbers 1627 and 1628). The war interested Lincoln for the first time seriously in Indian reform, but the resolution of the Minnesota problem involved no reforms. Minnesota officials and the national government assuaged local resentments over Lincoln's pardoning 265 Sioux prisoners by removing the tribe from the state and keeping the pardoned Indians in confinement. The government also removed the Winnebagos, who had not participated in the uprising, but let the Chippewas stay, probably because they were of special interest to Indian reformer Henry B. Whipple, who had influence with the Lincoln administration.

By 1864, Lincoln had lost interest in Indian reform. The war and reelection preoccupied him. Indian Commissioner Dole tried a policy of concentrating the Indians on a few reservations remote from white settlement, and the military played a larger role than before in dealing with Indians. The Army proved as inept at handling Indians as the Interior Department's notoriously corrupt Office of Indian Affairs. In November, 1864, at Sand Creek, Colorado Territory, white militia massacred hundreds of Indians, killing children, scalping women, castrating men, and butchering pregnant women. News did not reach Washington until January, 1865, but it startled Congress and led to debate, investigation, and, years after Lincoln died, reform.

It is never very inspiring to read about nineteenth-century Indian affairs, and the Civil War years are no exception. The story — though with special nuances of Confederate diplomacy, high drama in Minnesota, and extraordinary brutality in Colorado — is largely the same old story. Because the story continues while Abraham Lincoln is President, however, it becomes noteworthy. Lincoln, Nichols seems to be saying, in order to live up to his reputation should have stopped all of this.

There is no doubt that Lincoln did not alter the course of American Indian policy, but it has always seemed that he had an adequate excuse. Surely he had less opportunity for Indian reform than any President preceeding him except James Madison. Indian affairs were matters of low priority for Lincoln, as Nichols admits on occasion. Lincoln wrote Cherokee

Chief John Ross, for example, on September 25, 1862, explaining that a "multitude of cares" had prevented his examining the treaties between the United States and the Cherokee Nation. Rarely does Nichols forgive Lincoln for his inattention to Indian policy. He repeatedly accuses the administration of procrastination, temporizing, and abandonment — sins of omission which might more charitably be described as preoccupation with larger problems.

Nichols also accuses Lincoln of exploitation, a far more serious charge. Nichols has trouble proving it. His principal reliance is on pointing to what Lincoln would tolerate as proof of Lincoln's policy. Toleration of evil is another sin of omission, however, and could as well be a function of preoccupation with other problems.

In most instances, because of Lincoln's inattention to Indian affairs, Congress played a major role in Indian policy. The settlement of Minnesota's Indian problems, which Nichols characterizes as "Trading Lives for Land and Money," was embodied in legislation passed by the United States Congress. Congress gave Minnesota a \$1.5 million indemnity for losses incurred in the war. Congress appropriated the money to remove the Sioux from Minnesota. Congress appropriated money to remove the Winnebagos from Minnesota. If this was a "Lincoln bargain," as Nichols describes it, it was a bargain on which there was widespread agreement in Washington, D.C.

Often, Nichols assumes that Indian Commissioner William P. Dole's policies were Lincoln's policies. Were Salmon P. Chase's Treasury Department appointees who opposed Lincoln's renomination in 1864, Lincoln's appointees? One must be careful in judging the "Lincoln administration" or "the government." In fact, it remains difficult to describe Lincoln's Indian policy because he made so few statements on the problem and because he took little direct action in Indian affairs.

Barnum's American Museum. Sioux and Winnebago



Indian Chiefs, Warriors, and Squaws.

All fine specimens of their tribes, to be seen at all hours, together with

THE MONSTER PYTHON, The Great Dragon of the East.

The largest of the serpent species ever seen in America.

Splendid Dramatic Performances

Every afternoon and evening at 3 and 7½ o'clock.
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From the Louis A. Warren
Lincoln Library and Museum

FIGURE 2. An advertisement in *Harper's Weekly*.

Nichols's brief treatment of Lincoln's personal experience with Indian affairs before entering the White House typifies his grudging interpretation of Lincoln's actions. He mentions the famous episode in the Black Hawk War in which Lincoln allegedly defended an old Indian who strayed into camp from soldiers who wanted to kill him, but he bases the story on Carl Sandburg's *Abraham Lincoln: The Prairie Years*. Benjamin P. Thomas found more reliable evidence for the story. In *Abraham Lincoln: A Biography*, Thomas notes that Lincoln let the story stand in a campaign biography which he carefully corrected for William Dean Howells. Nichols concludes that "Lincoln learned how to use Indian affairs for political advantage" in the Black Hawk War. Yet the nature of that experience is not easily interpreted. In fact, Lincoln returned from the war so late in the summer that he had only two weeks to campaign for the legislature. Moreover, Lincoln must have enlisted, in part, for the same inglorious reasons so many soldiers enlist: he was unemployed (or about to be) and had no family in New Salem. He may have "understood the potency of the Indian-fighter image in the age of Andrew Jackson," but Lincoln never tried to capitalize on such an image. He did not go by the phony title many ex-frontier militiamen did, "Captain" Lincoln, and he confessed plainly that he never saw any "live, fighting Indians" in the war. That he also prided himself on his election as captain was a function of Lincoln's love of democratic praise and seems in no way to constitute capitalizing on his experience, such as it was, as an Indian-fighter.

"Lincoln, in the years before he became president," Nichols says, "apparently never challenged the American consensus on the necessity for Indian removal to make way for white progress." This is really Nichols's basic charge against Lincoln for the Presidential years as well: he failed to challenge the consensus on Indian policy. Nichols shares a view of politics common in America today. His book is sprinkled with a street-slang view of the political process; politicians "play their power games" while the Indians suffer, and Indians are "the pawns of power politics." Nichols is outraged that the Indian Bureau was a part of the patronage system. Everything in Lincoln's government ran on the patronage system — in some sense, even the war. To "depoliticize Indian affairs" was an unrealistic ideal requiring a massive reorganization probably unobtainable in wartime and not guaranteed to solve the

Indians' problems.

The book's one-sidedness can best be seen in its treatment of the formulaic language of Indian relations. This mannered, formal pidgin-English seems quaint and has always troubled historians of Indian relations. In the hands of a historian with a case to make, it can be a powerful tool. Nichols, probably unconsciously, has a tendency to make a mockery of the language when used by whites and to interpret it seriously when used by Indians. Lincoln's comparison of "this pale-faced people and their red brethren," when a delegation of chiefs visited the White House on March 27, 1863, is termed an "incredible recitation" by Nichols. By contrast, Nichols says this of a Cherokee pledge of fealty:

In spite of Lincoln's abandonment of their cause, the Cherokee leaders continued to place faith in the White House after Andrew Johnson assumed office, "Our trust is in your wisdom and sense of justice to protect us from wrong and oppression." That trust in the "great father" was destined to be even more severely tested for the Natives farther north in the Republican state of Minnesota.

There is no more reason to take formal Indian pledges of trust seriously than there is to take seriously white expressions of bonds of brotherhood between red men and white. There is a tendency, however, in today's climate of sympathy for the Indians to treat only one side of the story with the historian's usual critical tools.

The angry tone and constant straining for high effect by linking the Sixteenth President with distant developments in Indian affairs mar this book. It is otherwise a well-researched, competently written analysis of the major developments in Indian relations under the Lincoln administration. Nichols's publisher, the University of Missouri Press, deserves special praise for a beautifully designed and carefully printed book. The typeface is handsome, the footnotes are at the bottom of the page, there are few typographical errors, and the jacket design is original and attractive. University presses have become practically the last bastions of decent book design in the country. Nichols's *Lincoln and the Indians* fills a void in the Lincoln literature which probably will not need refilling (at book-length) again. However, the reader should proceed with caution. The author's animosity to politics can only distort the image of a man with Lincoln's known fondness for the political arts.



FIGURE 3. "Lincoln Recevant Les Indiens Comanches," a rare French print, showing the Sixteenth President speaking to a delegation of Indian chiefs. Such delegations visited Washington regularly, and greeting them was a heavy burden on the President, the Indian Bureau, and other Washington officials.

From the Louis A. Warren
Lincoln Library and Museum



From the Louis A. Warren
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FIGURES 4 — 5. A great attraction at the Metropolitan Fair of the United States Sanitary Commission in New York in the spring of 1864, was the Indian Department. *Harper's Weekly* noted high interest in this exhibit "in which the life of those who, only a little while ago, held undisputed possession of our continent, is reproduced by a handful of the once absolute tribes for the pleasure of the pale-faced race, whose ancestors pushed them into obscurity and historical oblivion."



THE INDIAN DEPARTMENT.

COMMITTEE-MAN. "No, no, WALK-IN-THE-MUD! You mustn't go and scalp those ladies. We don't do so here! And your Great Father wouldn't like it!"

WALK-IN-THE-MUD. "Scalpee 'em! Me no want scalpee 'em!—They so nice me want go hug 'em!"

COMMITTEE-MAN. "Oh, is that all! Then you may go. They have a partiality for Distinguished Foreigners."

From the Louis A. Warren
Lincoln Library and Museum

Feb 13, 1990

Mr. Maspin:

The article in the Independence paper says you researched the life of Lincoln. I wonder if you ran across these accounts of the "Great Emancipator". I never understood, if Lincoln was against slavery (which is questionable) but to him the Native American was to be slaughtered into annihilation. He may have been poor and humble but that does not outweigh his greed for the Native American's land. I have yet to figure out why there was no outcry from the "Christians" that came to this land for "freedom of worship" - why was slavery allowed, why were they and the Native Americans treated as less than animals.

The article in the paper said you are 83. Evidently all the research you have done is from the twisted accounts of history written by white people. I am 63, white and still angry at the way Native Americans were portrayed as savages and uncivilized in our public schools. You have done nothing but perpetuate a hero worship, half truth myth about this butcherer.

E. Luera Jones

1408 W. 28 Terr.

Independence mo 64052

This month, teachers extoll the virtues of Abraham Lincoln as the "Great Emancipator"--but to many Native Americans his image is comparable to that of a war criminal.

* Lincoln ordered the largest official mass execution in American history--the hanging of 38 Sante warriors on December 26, 1863.

* He ordered the permanent incarceration of 329 Dakota prisoners at Mankato. By the end of 1864, 67 of these prisoners died of deliberate starvation.

* He ordered the post-war incarceration of 1600 Indian men, women and children, mostly the latter, at Fort Snelling. (Herding, concentrating Indians and confining them to reservations was the fixed policy of Lincoln.)

* Lincoln ordered the forced removal of 2,000 Winnebagos from Minnesota simply "because they were Indians" and whites wanted their land.

* He signed an order on Aug. 23, 1864, for the sale of the Winnebago's 54,000 acres of land leaving them destitute. 24 died enroute to the Dakotas. Children died lacking medical care.

* Lincoln gave his early endorsement to the Dawes Act of 1887, causing Indian Nations to lose 86 million acres of land between 1887 and 1934.

* In 1864 and 1865 Lincoln ordered out expeditions to destroy as many Indians as possible.

* His Secretary of State even asked the British authorities to cross into Canada in pursuit of Indian landowners.

* By 1865, Lincoln had 20,000 Confederate troops in Indian country in pursuit of Indians.

* In Aug., 1864, 7,500 Navajos, including 1,200 children were held prisoner in N.M. following a scorched-earth campaign led by Kit Carson.

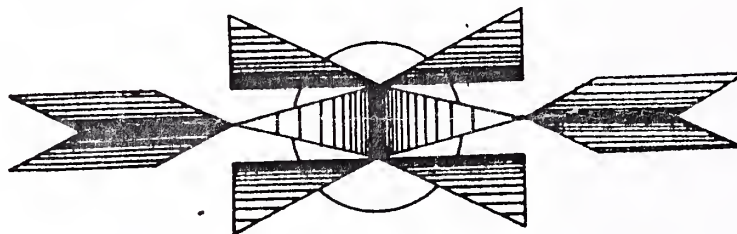
* In November, 1864, Col. Chivington's troops attacked 500 unsuspecting Cheyenne at Sand Creek and killed 150, mostly women and children. The Cheyenne leader had raised both a white flag and an American flag.

* Lincoln's military brutality ended with his death on April 14, 1865.

YET, THIS COUNTRY MEMORIALIZES ABRAHAM LINCOLN ON THE PENNY AND AT MOUNT RUSHMORE IN OUR SACRED BLACK HILLS WHERE HIS LIKENESS IS BLASPHEMY!

By Pat Locke, The Lakota Times, March, 1988.

Source: Lincoln and the Indians--Civil War Policy and Politics, David A. Nichols, University of Missouri Press, 1978.



Removal of the Winnebago Indians

97

• 115 LINCOLN, ABRAHAM, *President*. Manuscript document signed in full as President, countersigned by Joseph Wilson, acting Commissioner of the General Land Office, Washington, D.C., 23 August 1864. 1½ pages, large folio, 423 × 279 mm. (16⅞ × 10⅞ in.), written in a clear secretarial hand on lined paper, the text occupying pages 1 and 4 of a four-page sheet, minor wear at fold intersections neatly strengthened.

"TO THE HIGHEST BIDDER AT PUBLIC OUTCRY": THE REMOVAL OF THE WINNEBAGO TRIBE

One of a very few documents which directly connect the sixteenth President to the tragic and frequently harsh treatment of native Americans on the frontier. The document gives Presidential authorization for the sale at auction of the homes, farms and woodlands granted to the Winnebago tribe by treaties, and which they had occupied peacefully since 1855. Those treaties were abrogated by Congress in February 1863 by laws initiated by local landowners and commercial interests in the aftermath of the Sioux tribes' depredations in Minnesota.

The document is headed "By the President of the United States," and, beneath, "For the Sale of Valuable Land in the Late Winnebago Indian Reservation." It continues: "In pursuance of law, I, Abraham Lincoln . . . do hereby declare and make known that public sales will be held . . . in the State of Minnesota . . . at the Land Office at St. Peter . . . for the disposal of the Public Lands comprised in the late reserve for the Winnebago Indians . . . situated in the following parts of townships . . . which will be sold at the appraised value of the land and the improvements thereon . . ." There follows a description of the location of the tracts, (comprising some 55,000 acres) which had been, until May 1863, the Winnebago tribe's reservation, and other information regarding the public sale of these lands. The place and date of the document, and the signatures of President Lincoln and Wilson, follow. At the bottom of the first page, continuing onto the second, is a supplementary notice headed, "Notice to Actual, bona fide Settlers," which details the provisions of the Congressional Act of 21 February 1863 concerning the procedure for obtaining these lands by "pre-emption . . . previous to their exposure to sale to the highest bidder at public outcry."

The Winnebagos had been removed from ancestral lands in Iowa to lands at Long Prairie, Minnesota, in 1848, then, by the 1855 treaty, to the Blue Earth River lands in south central Minnesota (southwest of Minneapolis-St. Paul, near present-day Mankato). Here they cleared lands, planted crops and established farms. In August 1862, though, the Sioux tribes settled nearby mounted savage attacks against local white settlements. As Lincoln explained in his annual address to Congress of 1 December 1862, the Sioux "attacked the settlements in their vicinity with extreme ferocity, killing indiscriminately, men, women, and children. This attack was wholly unexpected . . . The State of Minnesota has suffered great injury . . . The people of that State manifest much anxiety for the removal of the tribes beyond the limits of the State as a guarantee against future hostilities . . ." (Basler, 5:525-526).

Some 300 Indians, all Sioux, were captured by the U.S. Army and, before a military tribunal, sentenced to hang. Lincoln's well-known Presidential order to Governor Sibley of 6 December 1862, pardoned all but 39 whose direct involvement in the massacre could be proven (Basler, 5:542-543). But on 16th December, Representative William Windom and Senator Morton Wilkinson, both of Minnesota, introduced legislation in Congress abrogating the previous treaties and prescribing the forced removal of the peaceful Winnebagos as well as the warlike Sioux. The Winnebago removal act passed on February 21, 1863; the Sioux removal act a few days later. Both tribes, it was decreed, would be transported by river steamers from Fort Snelling (present-day Minneapolis) and resettled on unoccupied (and inhospitable) lands near Fort Randall, in Dakota territory. The painful removal (during which many Winnebagos died) was accomplished in May 1863. When the Fort Randall lands proved incapable of supporting the tribe, they were again transported to more productive lands in northeastern Nebraska (south of Sioux City, Iowa). "The demands of the state government and people of Minnesota had thus been met; the Indians had been effectively removed from the boundaries of civilization. . . . The bureaucratic callousness which allowed this was in some ways less forgivable than the passionate ferocity of the Indians themselves . . ." (William E. Lass, "The Removal from Minnesota of the Sioux and Winnebago Indians," in *Minnesota History*, 38:8:353-364). A copy of this and other pertinent source materials accompanies the document.

Provenance:

Elsie O. and Philip D. Sang Foundation (sale, Sotheby Parke Bernet, 3 June 1980, lot 977).

\$15,000-20,000

4/21/92

By the President of the United States.

For the Sale of Valuable lands in the late Winnebago Indian Reservation, in Minnesota.

In pursuance of law, I, Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States of America, do hereby declare and make known that public Sales will be held in the undermentioned Land Office, in the State of Minnesota, at the period hereinafter designated, to wit:

At the Land Office at St. Peter, Commencing on Monday the Fifth day of December next, for the disposal of the Public lands comprised in the late reserve for the Winnebago Indians, above mentioned, and situated within the following parts of Townships, which will be sold at the appraised value of the land and the improvements thereon, viz:

North of the base line, and West of the fifth principal Meridian.

In Township One hundred and Six, Range twenty four. - - -	15,384.46. acres.
In Township One hundred and seven, Range twenty four. - - -	5,405.44. "
In Township One hundred and six, Range twenty five. - - -	15,254.34. "
In Township One hundred and seven, Range twenty five. - - -	17,649.71. "
In Township One hundred and eight, Range twenty five. - - -	277.81. "

A Schedule particularly describing the individual tracts with the appraised values per acre respectively, will be open for inspection at the District Land Office in Minnesota.

The offering of the above lands will be commenced on the day appointed, and will proceed in the order designated in the above mentioned Schedule, and consecutively by Townships as herein advertised, until the whole shall have been offered and the sale thus closed; but the sale shall not be kept open longer than two weeks, and no private entry of any of the lands will be admitted until after the expiration of the two weeks.

Given under my hands at the City of Washington this twenty third day of August, Anno Domini, One thousand, eight hundred and sixty four.

By the President:

Abraham Lincoln

A. Nelson

Acting Commissioner of the General Land Office.

Notice to Actual, bona-fide Settlers.

Preemptors.

In the 3d section of the Act of Congress, Approved 21st February, 1863, - Statutes Vol 12 p 658, opening to Sale the Winnebago Reservation, it is stipulated that before any person shall be entitled to enter any portion of the said lands, by

(over)

Executive Mansion,

Washington, Dec 20th, 1863.

"I shall not attempt to retract
or modify the emancipation pro-
clamation; nor shall I return to
slavery any person who is free
by the terms of that proclama-
tion, or by any of the acts of
Congress."

Abraham Lincoln

American Historical Letters
and Documents

including the Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Harry Spiro

New York
Thursday, May 14, 1992



CHRISTIE'S

Lincoln's Agonizing Decision

by Daniel W. Homstad

In late 1862, while suffering through continuing Union military disasters, handling a contentious cabinet, and wrestling with the Emancipation Proclamation, President Abraham Lincoln had to agonize over another matter. He had to decide whether to allow the executions of more than 300 Indians convicted of war crimes in Minnesota's Great Sioux Uprising.

One of the first and bloodiest Indian wars on the western frontier, the Great Sioux Uprising (today called the "Dakota-U.S. Conflict") cost the lives of hundreds of Native Americans, white settlers, and soldiers. After the U.S. Army suppressed the uprising it established a commission that condemned 303 Dakota men in trials that were patently unfair. Federal law, however, required the president's approval of the death sentences. "Anxious to not act with so much clemency as to encourage another outbreak on the one hand, nor with so much severity as to be real cruelty on the other," Lincoln ignored the howling of a white populace thirsting for revenge and began the arduous task of reviewing the trial records and deciding the fates of hundreds of men.

THE DAKOTA HAD EXISTED FOR GENERATIONS on the land surrounding the confluence of the Mississippi and Minnesota Rivers, site of the present-day cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul. Translated roughly into English, *Dakota* means "the allies," and they were a group of seven Indian bands that lived mostly in harmony in the region's bountiful river val-



Above: The Dakota's Chief Little Crow was reluctant to begin a war in Minnesota.

Opposite: President Abraham Lincoln had to decide whether hundreds of Little Crow's people would hang.

leys. Their only enemy was the Chippewa to the north. The first European explorers there had done little to alter the Indians' way of life, although the French dubbed them the Sioux—a mutation of the Chippewa word for "snake." Real change began after 1819, when federal soldiers built Fort Snelling, a sprawling outpost above the mouth of the Minnesota River. After that the stream of white traders and settlers became a flood; land treaties in 1837 and 1851 and Minnesota statehood in 1858 pushed the Dakota off their native lands westward to a narrow, 100-mile-long reservation on the harsh prairie along the Minnesota River.

The exodus also forced the Dakota to change their way of life. Government agents on the reservation favored those Dakota who settled on plots, learned English, cut their hair, and took up farming. Yet the crops failed year after year, and the Dakota grew dependent upon government gold annuities that were promised by the land treaties, and upon the foods and sundries peddled by white traders. The Dakota were often left with little after government agents paid annuity moneys first to the traders who had given credit to the Dakota for goods purchased at highly over-inflated prices. Those Dakota who refused to give up their traditional ways were in an even worse position and spent many winters in near-starving conditions.

The situation reached its flashpoint in the summer of 1862. The financial cost of the Civil War was bleeding the government dry, and rumors flew that there would be no

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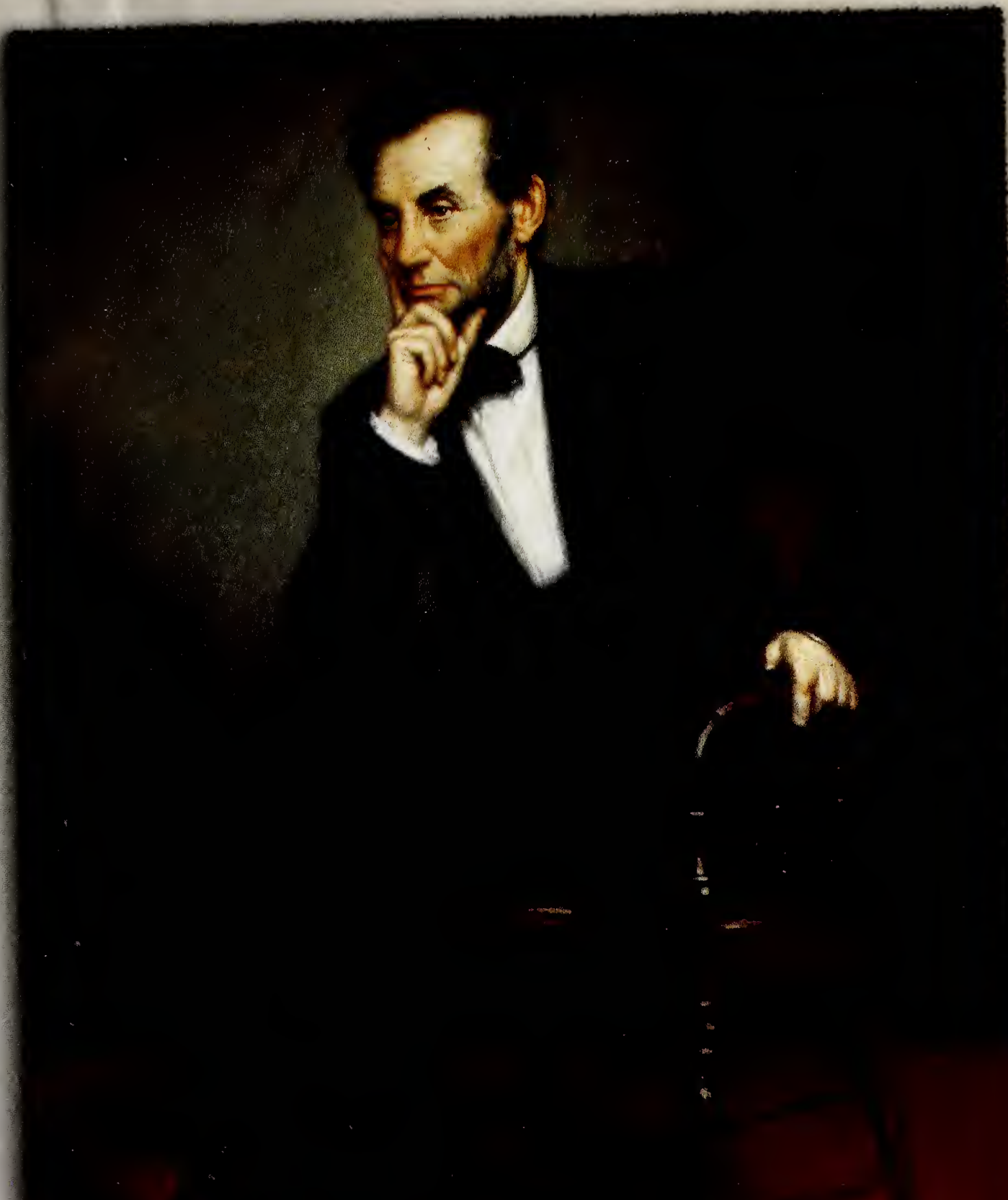
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Even as the Civil War intensified, President Abraham Lincoln faced the aftereffects of a bloody Indian war in Minnesota. More than 300 men faced execution, but the death sentences required the president's approval.

annuity gold for the Dakota. Traders who had liberally given credit in the past now slammed the door. One trader named Andrew Myrick announced that if the Dakota were hungry they could "eat grass." Tensions mounted until four Dakota led by an Indian named Killing Ghost murdered five white settlers on August 17. Some Dakota leaders sensed this was an opportunity to strike back at the U.S. Government, and they pressed Chief Taoyateduta, or Little Crow, to strike at the whites while many soldiers were fighting in the Civil War. Little Crow initially wanted no part of a war with the whites, recognizing the calamity that would surely follow. But when faced with a challenge to his authority, he reluctantly relented. Ironically, the annuity gold shipment had left St. Paul that same day.

The Dakota raged across the countryside with a fury. Four to eight hundred white settlers were butchered during the first four days of the rampage, while their farms and fields burned. The Dakota hit first and hard at the reservation agency, killing dozens. One of the victims was trader Myrick. His killers stuffed his mouth with grass. The Dakota also struck at the region's army outpost and towns. They annihilated a detachment of soldiers dispatched from nearby Fort Ridgely before being repulsed in two assaults on the garrison itself. They twice attacked and burned most of the town of New Ulm but failed to capture it from its armed residents.

Panic surged throughout Minnesota. Tens of thousands of terrified settlers fled and virtually depopulated the state's western regions. Governor Alexander Ramsey dispatched 1,200 men from Fort Snelling under the command of Henry H. Sibley, a former fur trader, politician, and friend of the Dakota. Sibley was not regular army, but he heeded Ramsey's call and accepted a commission as colonel. Unsure of his authority, Sibley failed to declare martial law and moved excruciatingly slowly. He did not engage the Dakota until early September 1862, when Indians surprised and butchered a 150-man reconnaissance detail at Birch Coulee. The debacle slowed Sibley even more, and he did not meet Little Crow in full force until September 22,



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MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Top: A painting by Henry August Schwabe depicts one of the furious attacks against the town of New Ulm. The settlers there fought the Dakota off twice, but at great cost. **Above:** Refugees fleeing the war zone pause for a rest. **Opposite:** After the uprising, Dakota prisoners await their fate at Fort Snelling. Wo-wi-na-pe, Little Crow's son, stands second from the right.



redeem himself at the Dakota's expense. He immediately approved Sibley's plans. "The horrible massacres of women and children and the outrageous abuse of female prisoners, still alive, call for punishment far beyond human power to inflict," Pope wrote. "It is my purpose utterly to exterminate the Sioux if I have the power to do so . . . They are to be treated as maniacs and wild beasts."

The commission began the hearings on the reservation on September 28 and tried 16 men that day alone. This

Dakota were accused of merely participating in battles. The defendants entered a plea, and those who pleaded not guilty had an opportunity to speak. The commission then called and examined its own witnesses, but it did not permit the Dakota to have counsel for their defense. As one man who assisted in gathering evidence against the Indians noted, "[T]he plan was adopted to subject all the grown men, with a few exceptions to an investigation of the commission, trusting that the innocent would make their innocence appear."



WHITNEY GALLERY, MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

when he won a decisive victory at Wood Lake. The Dakota scattered over the prairie. Sibley finally managed to capture about 1,200 men, women, and children, but Little Crow was not among them. Sibley intended to prosecute as war criminals those Indians who had participated in the rebellion.

SIBLEY ORDERED a commission of five military officers to try the prisoners summarily and "pass judgment upon them, if found guilty of murders or other outrages upon the Whites, during the present State of hostilities of the Indians." Major General John Pope, re-

breakneck pace continued, and by November 3—a mere five weeks later—the commission had conducted 392 trials, including an astonishing 40 in one day. Observer Reverend J.P. Williamson noted that the trials took less time than the state courts required to try a single murder defendant. The accused were hauled before the com-

The commission received testimony from eyewitnesses to some of the murders. Most of the evidence turned out to be hearsay, with witnesses declaring what they heard others say about particular killings. Some witnesses said they merely saw a defendant "whooping around" or bragging about killings. The commission relied heavily on six

Panic surged throughout Minnesota. Tens of thousands of terrified settlers fled and virtually depopulated the state's western regions.

cently banished to Minnesota by President Lincoln after Pope's humiliating defeat at the Civil War's Battle of Second Bull Run, saw an opportunity to

mission, sometimes manacled together in groups, and were arraigned through an interpreter. The charges ranged from rape to murder to theft, although most

witnesses, each of whom offered evidence in dozens of trials. The most damning of these was Joseph Godfrey, a mulatto who had lived among the

Dakota and taken a Dakota wife. He was one of the first tried and convicted of engaging extensively in "massacres," but the commission, impressed with Godfrey's courtroom presence, recommended imprisonment instead of hanging because he

nothing at all . . ." Godfrey testified in more than 50 trials. In a remarkable irregularity the commission even allowed him to question particular witnesses. The Dakota quickly dubbed him *Otake*, or "One Who Kills Many." Most defendants admitted to partici-

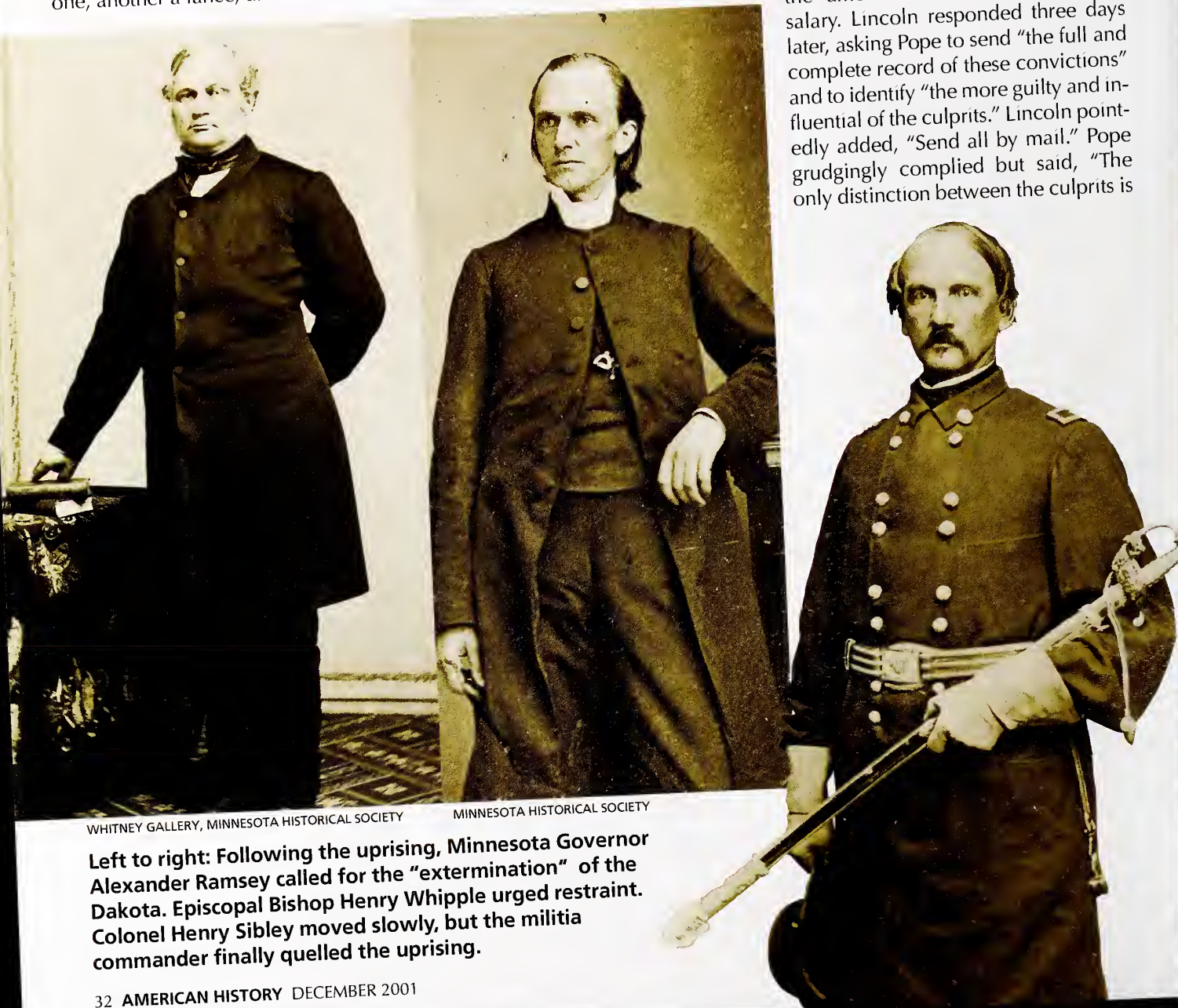
aim, or their weapons did not fire. Some testified they merely watched others fight or commit atrocities. Others offered evidence that they had saved the lives of whites, but the commission largely ignored it, even when the accounts were corroborated.

"The only distinction between the culprits is as to which of them murdered most people or violated most young girls. All of them are guilty of these things in more or less degree."

was willing to testify against other defendants. The court reporter noted that Godfrey's "observation and memory were remarkable. Not the least thing had escaped his eye or ear. Such an Indian had a double-barreled gun, another a single-barreled, another a long one, another a lance, and another one

pating in some sort of warfare, whether in battles, attacks on armed settlements, or skirmishes with settlers. After news of the first few death sentences spread among the prisoners, however, many defendants then claimed they did not shoot at settlers or soldiers, or they did not hit them because of poor

SIBLEY AND POPE DESPERATELY wanted to begin the executions immediately, but the sentences required presidential review. On November 7 Pope telegraphed the names of the condemned to Lincoln, at a cost of \$400. The editors of the *New York Times* berated Pope for his profligacy and suggested the amount be deducted from his salary. Lincoln responded three days later, asking Pope to send "the full and complete record of these convictions" and to identify "the more guilty and influential of the culprits." Lincoln pointedly added, "Send all by mail." Pope grudgingly complied but said, "The only distinction between the culprits is



WHITNEY GALLERY, MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Left to right: Following the uprising, Minnesota Governor Alexander Ramsey called for the "extermination" of the Dakota. Episcopal Bishop Henry Whipple urged restraint. Colonel Henry Sibley moved slowly, but the militia commander finally quelled the uprising.

as to which of them murdered most people or violated most young girls. All of them are guilty of these things in more or less degree."

Pope's opinions were only the tip of the iceberg. As Lincoln began his deliberations, people on both sides of the issue bombarded him with letters and telegrams. Politicians, army officers, and clergy called on the president at the White House, each adding his take on the situation and offering advice. Lincoln dutifully and patiently listened. One of his own secretaries, John Nicolay, had been in Minnesota at the time of the conflict, and he told Lincoln that from "the days of King Philip to the time of Black Hawk, there has hardly been an outbreak so treacherous, so sudden, so bitter, and so bloody, as that which filled the State of Minnesota with sorrow and lamentation . . ." Nicolay's words must have struck a chord with Lincoln, for the president had been a militia volunteer during the 1832 Black Hawk War in Illinois and Wisconsin.

Governor Ramsey telegraphed Lincoln, "It would be wrong upon principle and policy" to refuse the executions. "Private revenge would on all this border take the place of official judgment of these Indians." Two congressmen and a senator from Minnesota warned Lincoln that, should he grant clemency, "the outraged people of Minnesota will dispose of these wretches without law. These two peoples cannot live together." A "resolution" from St. Paul residents declared, "The blood of hundreds of our murdered fellow citizens cries from the ground for vengeance . . . The Indian's nature can no more be trusted than the wolf's." Pope chimed in again as well, warning Lincoln that the "indiscriminate massacre" of all Dakota would

occur if the president was too lenient. One man stood almost alone with a voice of moderation. Bishop Henry Whipple, head of the Minnesota Episcopal Church, spoke often of the hypocrisy of federal Indian policies. In a newspaper editorial he wrote, "[I]f . . . vengeance is to be more than a savage thirst for blood, we must examine the causes which have brought this bloodshed . . . *Who is guilty of the causes which desolated our border? At whose door is the blood of these innocent victims?* I believe that God will hold the Nation guilty." Whipple was a cousin to Henry Halleck, Lincoln's general-in-chief, so the bishop gained an audience with the president in November and urged clemency. Lincoln was impressed. "He came here the



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Above: Judge Advocate General Joseph Holt told Abraham Lincoln that the president could not delegate the decision about the executions. **Right:** Lincoln decided to personally review all the cases.



CIVIL WAR TIMES ILLUSTRATED

other day," Lincoln said later, "and talked with me about the rascality of this Indian business, until I felt it down to my boots."

THE TIMING OF THE DAKOTA CRISIS could not have been worse for the president. On a personal level, he and his wife, Mary, still grieved over the death, nine months earlier, of their 11-year-old son, Willie. On a political level, the administration faced one crisis after

execute only a part of them, I must myself designate which, or could I leave the designation to some officer on the ground?" Holt answered, "I am quite sure the power cannot be delegated." So Lincoln began reviewing the trials.

The president first reviewed them as the expert lawyer he truly was. His political fortunes had often risen and fallen, but Lincoln's brilliant legal career had remained a constant. Largely self-taught, he gained a formidable reputa-

The president often utilized his legal skills when called upon to review the hundreds of Civil War military court verdicts appealed to him. By law and practice, there were basically two types of military courts at the time: courts martial and military commissions. Courts martial were comprised of a dozen officers and were generally held to try officers and enlisted men for dereliction of duty—sleeping while on sentry duty, cowardice, desertion, con-

The president often utilized his legal skills when called upon to review the hundreds of Civil War military court verdicts appealed to him.

another. The war effort was in tatters. Major General George McClellan's Army of the Potomac lay no closer to Richmond after the ill-conceived Peninsula Campaign and the bloody draw at Antietam. McClellan tolerated precious little advice from the president and sometimes even refused to meet with him. Finally the exasperated president dismissed the insolent general and replaced him with Ambrose Burnside, soon to be responsible for the Union disaster at Fredericksburg.

As the blunders mounted, Lincoln also faced a challenge to his leadership from disgruntled cabinet members. Treasury Secretary Salmon Chase, perpetually jealous of Lincoln and furious that the president did not turn to him for military advice, sulked and plotted behind the president's back. Lincoln knew of these designs and only tolerated them because Chase was a supremely able leader of his department.

Slavery issues preoccupied Lincoln as well. Somewhere between the bad tidings and bouts of depression the president managed to work on the final drafts of the Emancipation Proclamation, an executive order that would free the slaves in most of the South, even as he was being called upon to suppress the Dakota.

The Minnesota business weighed heavily on Lincoln's mind. "Three hundred Indians have been sentenced to death in Minnesota by a Military Commission, and execution only awaits my action," he wrote to Judge Advocate General Joseph Holt. "I wish your legal opinion whether if I should conclude to

tion as both a defense lawyer and court-appointed prosecutor known for his piercing cross-examinations and folksy, countrified manner. He continually asserted he was "not an accomplished lawyer," but Lincoln appeared before the Illinois Supreme Court more than 200 times and made a small fortune as one of the principal lawyers for the Illinois Central Railroad.

duct unbecoming an officer—and for crimes such as rape and murder. Military commissions usually consisted of less than a dozen officers and were convened in areas where martial law had been declared, to try civilians accused of military crimes—spying, smuggling, conducting guerrilla actions against Union troops, and recruiting for the Confederacy. The law



allowed the convicted to appeal to Lincoln in most cases, and in capital cases it was a matter of right. In the midst of the havoc wrought by the war, Lincoln spent many hours of many days reviewing transcripts and receiving visits from the pleading family members of convicted men.

Lincoln could easily see the defects of the Dakota trials. Most importantly, the Dakota defendants had not been allowed representation by counsel. Defense lawyers would have raised objections to the jurisdiction of the commission in an area where martial law had not been ordered, as required by law. They would have questioned the impartiality of the five officers on the commission, all of whom fought against the Dakota and undoubtedly harbored ill will toward them. Defense lawyers would have cross-examined the commission's witnesses, pointing out inconsistencies in their testimony and exposing their biases, particularly those—such as Godfrey—who “turned government’s evidence” and likely testified falsely in

attempts to curry favor with the commission and save their necks. Without counsel, the defendants—already trapped behind a language and cultural barrier—did not have anyone to help them understand the proceedings, offer credible mitigating evidence, or develop and practice their own testimonies.

The president could also see how the trials’ rapidity prevented a full and fair analysis of the facts. The weight and impact of evidence simply could not be properly processed in a few minutes, especially in capital cases with their ultimate stakes. Undoubtedly the brevity of the trials resulted from the absence of defense counsel. The president could also see how the commission convicted many men with insufficient evidence.

Lincoln, a master politician, also reviewed trials with a political perspective. On December 1 he gave the requisite nod to those who had pressured him against clemency by telling Congress, “The State of Minnesota has suffered great injury from this Indian war.” While he did not tip his hand about his immi-

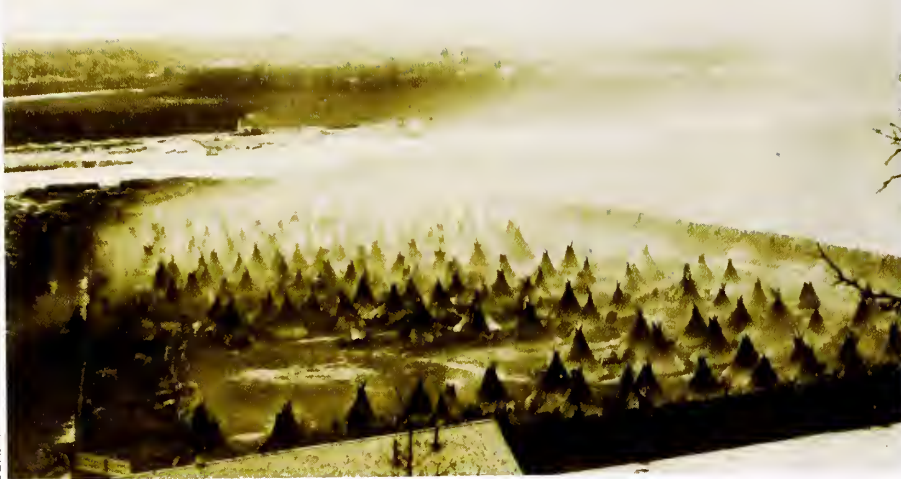
nent decision, it was a signal he would offer some satisfaction there. Yet he also knew how the rest of the world, especially Britain—still considering whether to recognize the Confederacy as an independent nation—would perceive the mass execution of some 300 men. As Secretary of the Navy Gideon Welles noted in his diary: “When the intelligent Representatives of a State can deliberately besiege the Government to take the lives of these ignorant barbarians by wholesale . . . it would seem the sentiments of the Representatives were but slightly removed from the barbarians they would execute.”

Nevertheless, Lincoln’s compassion played the largest role in the predicament. In their lengthy debates over Civil War military court verdicts, Judge Advocate Holt often urged execution. Lincoln usually demurred, saying, “I don’t think I can do it,” or “I am trying to evade the butchering business lately.” Holt said Lincoln’s “constant desire was to save life.” John Hay, the other of Lincoln’s personal secretaries, wrote in his diary, “I was amused at the eagerness with which the President caught at any fact which would justify him in saving the life of a condemned soldier.” Statistics confirm these observations. In his review of death sentences for desertion, Lincoln disagreed with the trial courts at a rate of 75 percent initially, increasing to 95 percent by the middle of the war. He rarely approved execution for cowards because “it would frighten the poor devils too terribly,” and he never allowed execution for those who slept on sentry duty. In reviewing the death sentences of civilians handed down by military commissions, Lincoln disagreed with 60 percent of the trial courts. He was only merciless in cases involving cruelty or sex offenses. Any death sentence for rape or murder, whether from courts martial or commission, stood a 50- to 80 percent chance of being upheld upon presidential review.

Lincoln issued his decision in the Dakota cases on December 6, 1862. He later explained his rationale to the Senate:

The Dakota executions were carried out on December 26, 1862, at Mankato, Minnesota.





The Dakota who were not on trial were confined in this camp at Fort Snelling and removed to a reservation in May 1863.

"Anxious to not act with so much clemency as to encourage another outbreak on the one hand, nor with so much severity as to be real cruelty on the other, I caused a careful examination of the records of trials to be made, in view of first ordering the execution of such as had been proved guilty of violating females. Con-

ed, and two weeks later spared another man due to newly discovered exculpatory evidence. "The other condemned prisoners," Lincoln ordered Sibley, "you will hold subject to further orders, taking care that they neither escape, nor are subject to any unlawful violence."

With his "massacres" versus "battles" standard, Lincoln offered clemency to 265 of the condemned Dakota, or 87

would have received little sympathy from citizen juries. Lincoln *had* to make a final decision on the matter, and he did: his "massacres" versus "battles" standard recognized all legal and political issues and encompassed all reasonable solutions. His standard presented a plausible, practical effort to correct the verdicts and assign more appropriate standards of responsibility.

ON DECEMBER 27 President Lincoln received a telegram from Sibley: "I have the honor to inform you that the thirty-eight Indians and half-breeds, ordered by you for execution, were hung yesterday at Mankato, at 10 A.M. Everything went off quietly, and the other prisoners are well secured." The politicians and citizens of Minnesota had taken the president's order with a smoldering reserve, and there were no acts of vigilantism or mob law. The Dakota plunged simultaneously to their deaths on one giant gallows before thousands of spectators. It remains the largest mass execution in American history.

In the next year Sibley led a punitive expedition against those Dakota who had escaped after the conflict. A settler killed Little Crow after the Indian had sneaked back into Minnesota. After

Lincoln's order to Sibley—in his own handwriting—

allowed the execution of only 39 of the 303 condemned Dakota.

trary to my expectations, only two of this class were found. I then directed a further examination, and a classification of all who were proven to have participated in *massacres*, as distinguished from participation in *battles*."

Lincoln's order to Sibley—in his own handwriting—allowed the execution of only 39 of the 303 condemned Dakota. Of these, 29 had been convicted of murder, three for having "shot" someone, two for participating in "massacres," and one for mutilation. As Lincoln told the Senate, only two had been convicted of rape. Curiously, the president allowed the executions of two men who were convicted merely for participating in battles. Lincoln spared Godfrey, as the military commission request-

percent of them. Some analysts have argued that jurisdictional defects in the proceedings—namely, that the commission lacked authority because martial law had not been declared, and that the Dakota were not tried for military-type violations, but the common-law crimes of rape and murder—nullify Lincoln's well-intentioned efforts. While these arguments are probably true in theory, the reality of the situation was different. This was wartime; Lincoln could not have reversed the convictions wholesale, either ordering new trials or disapproving the proceedings entirely. The former would have caused great delay and the latter great outrage, either of which could have led to mob violence in Minnesota. Such actions would not necessarily have prevented the Dakota from being tried in state courts, where they

spending a freezing, disease-ridden winter at Fort Snelling, the remaining Dakota were banished to an inhospitable reservation in South Dakota. All, that is, except one man named Chaska. In an example personifying the trial defects, Chaska—who had saved the lives of captive white women—was errantly hanged instead of one Chaskaydon, convicted of shooting and mutilating a pregnant woman. The marshal of the prison had gone to release Chaska: "[B]ut when I asked for him, the answer was 'You hung him yesterday.' I could not bring back the redskin." ❖

Daniel W. Homstad, a lawyer and writer from Minnesota, is the author of *Horse Dreams, a novel about the 1862 Dakota-U.S. conflict*.

Lincoln and the Sioux

By RON SOODALTER



Disunion follows the Civil War as it unfolded.

Tags:

Abraham Lincoln, Minnesota, Native Americans, Sioux, The Civil War

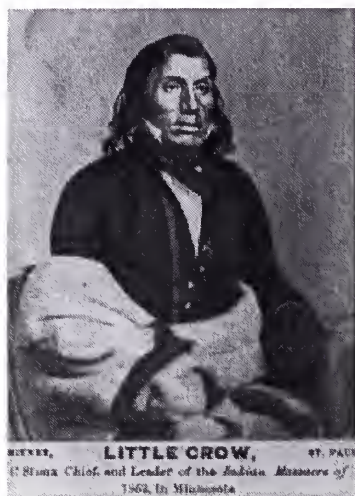
During his term as president, Abraham Lincoln was responsible for the largest mass execution – and the greatest act of clemency – in our nation’s history.

Indeed, as every schoolchild is aware, the history of our government’s relations with the American Indians is disgraceful. Congress never made a treaty that it wasn’t more than willing to break at the slightest provocation. Throughout the 18th and 19th centuries, tribe after tribe was left with no recourse other than rebellion or starvation, and the Dakota Sioux were no exception.

In 1851 – 10 years before the Civil War – the United States signed two treaties with the Sioux that resulted in the Indians’ ceding huge portions of the Minnesota Territory. In exchange, they were promised compensation in the form of cash and trade goods, and directed to live on a reservation along the upper Minnesota River. The thoroughly corrupt Bureau of Indian Affairs was responsible for overseeing the terms of the treaties. Not surprisingly, many of the trade goods were substandard and overvalued by several hundred percent, and the promised payments were often not forthcoming – stolen by Washington functionaries, or simply channeled directly to the crooked traders and Indian agents.

This situation continued for years. Finally, in 1858 – the year Minnesota entered the Union – a party of Sioux led by Chief Little Crow visited Washington to see about proper enforcement of the treaties. It did not go the way they’d hoped; instead of acknowledging the Sioux grievances, the government took back half their reservation, and opened it up to white settlement. The land was cleared, and the hunting and fishing that had in large measure sustained the Sioux virtually ended.

The situation worsened with each passing year, with the Sioux suffering increasing hunger and hardship. There was nothing to be gained by appealing to the traders; reportedly, their representative – a clod of a fellow fittingly named Andrew Jackson Myrick – responded to the Indians’ appeal for food with the comment, “So far as I am concerned, if they are hungry, let them eat grass or their own dung.”



Library of Congress Little Crow, a leader of the Sioux Uprising

In August 1862, the powder keg exploded. It began almost randomly, when a party of four braves on an egg-stealing foray impulsively killed five white settlers. From there, it escalated rapidly. Under the leadership of a somewhat reluctant Little Crow, several bands held a war council, and set about attacking the new settlements. They seized the Lower Sioux Agency, killing whites and burning the buildings. At the outbreak of hostilities, Myrick was one of the first casualties, and when his body was discovered, his mouth was stuffed with grass.

A combined force of militia and volunteer infantry set out to subdue the Indians. The two sides met at Redwood Ferry, where the Indians gave the soldiers a thorough drubbing, killing 24 men. Flush with victory, roving bands of Sioux destroyed entire townships throughout the month and into September, plundering and killing as they went. A number of desperate appeals for help had gone to Lincoln, but he was immersed in such day-to-day matters as the stunning debacle at Second Bull Run, Gen. Robert E. Lee's invasion of Maryland, Gen. George B. McClellan's heartbreaking failure to follow up after Antietam, and the release of the Preliminary Emancipation Proclamation.

Finally, over a month after the outbreak of the Sioux uprising, Lincoln responded, assigning Gen. John Pope, fresh from his defeat at Bull Run, the task of ending the uprising. A pompous, self-righteous man, Pope declared his "purpose to utterly exterminate the Sioux.... They are to be treated as maniacs and wild beasts."

The Army finally subdued the Sioux in the battle of Wood Lake on Sept. 23. The butcher's bill at the end of the fighting totaled some 77 soldiers killed, between 75 and 100 Sioux, and – no one took an accurate count – between 300 and 800 white settlers.

The Sioux who surrendered were promised safety. But once the hostilities were over, hundreds of Sioux – some of whom had had nothing to do with the uprising – were arrested and summarily tried by a five-man military commission. The trials were perfunctory affairs, some lasting less than five minutes. More than 40 cases were adjudicated in one day alone. Due process played no part; most of the defendants hadn't a clue what was happening. Of the 393 tried for "murder and other outrages," 323 were convicted, and 303 sentenced to hang – including those who had surrendered with a promise of safety.

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The final approval for the executions rested with the president. General Pope, seeking a quick and dramatic finish to the affair, pressured Lincoln to sign the orders for all 303 executions. Nor was he alone; outraged newspaper editors and congressmen advocated a speedy hanging as well. Alexander Ramsey, the governor of Minnesota — who had made a fortune cheating the Sioux — threatened that if the president didn't hang all the condemned, the citizens of his state would.

The Sioux had a rare friend, however, in Minnesota's Episcopal bishop, Henry Whipple. The clergyman traveled to Washington and met with Lincoln, who was so impressed with Whipple's account that he ordered that every case be re-examined on its own merits. After thorough analysis, only 38 Sioux could be proved to have participated in the uprising. Lincoln immediately approved their execution order, and commuted the sentences of the others. In a finish that is pure Lincoln, the president hand wrote the list of long, difficult, phonetically spelled Sioux names himself, and advised the telegrapher on the vital necessity of sending them correctly, lest the wrong men be hanged.

On Dec. 26, 38 Dakota Sioux were led to the scaffold; they sang their death songs as they walked, and when they had mounted the scaffold and the hoods were drawn down over their faces, they continued to sing and sway, and clasp one another's manacled hands. At a drum signal, the trap was sprung, and the watching crowd of thousands cheered.



Library of CongressThe execution of 38 Sioux

men on Dec. 26, 1862

The year after the uprising, Congress expunged all Sioux treaties from the record, took back their reservation and ordered that the entire tribe be expelled from Minnesota. As an incentive, a bounty of \$25 was offered for the scalp of any Sioux found living in the state after the edict. There still was scattered resistance, but the Dakota War was over. The Sioux would continue to fight for years to come, until 1890, when the Army marked paid to their account by massacring at least 150 men, women and children from the tribe at Wounded Knee.

Given the mood of the country regarding what were seen as unprovoked savage depredations, what drove Lincoln to spare the lives of so many Sioux? The wonder isn't that Lincoln allowed more than three dozen men to hang; it's that he took the time away from a war that was going badly — and that threatened the very existence of our nation — to examine one at a time the cases of more than 300 Sioux, and to spare the lives of all but 38 of them.

While Lincoln felt that there must be a reckoning, and that the wholesale killing of settlers could neither be condoned nor ignored, he would not allow the law to be used to elicit indiscriminate revenge, despite the tremendous pressure on him to do just that. When it was suggested to him that he would have garnered political support by allowing the original orders to stand, he responded, "I could not hang men for votes."

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Abraham Lincoln's Dakota massacre recalled

Submitted by Bill Weinberg on Thu, 12/27/2012 - 04:40 [Homeland Theater](#) [1] [Native America](#) [2]

Text

At a ceremony in Minnesota, Dakota Indians and their supporters commemorated the 150th anniversary of the largest mass execution in US history—ordered by President Lincoln.

Dakota Indians and their supporters commemorated the largest mass execution in US history at a ceremony Dec. 26 in Mankato, Minn. On that day in 1862, a public hanging was held of 38 Dakota men, for crimes allegedly committed in that year's US-Dakota War—the execution order personally signed by President Abraham Lincoln. A new monument was dedicated as part of the ceremony at the town's old hanging ground, now called Reconciliation Park. Participants included a group of some 50 Dakota horseback riders and supporters who left South Dakota three weeks ago for Mankato. One organizer of the ride, Peter Lengkeek, told the crowd: "In 1862, those 38 were hung as criminals. They died because they were protecting the children, the women, our way of life. And for that I am ever thankful."

According to an 1862 eyewitness report in the New York Times, most of the men on the hanging scaffold sang a Dakota death song, while some mixed-bloods who had embraced Christianity sang a hymn. Several had worked their hands free, and clasped a final grip with the man next to them. Some 4,000 spectators watched, as well as 1,400 uniformed soldiers in the Minnesota Sixth, Eighth and Ninth regiments—there to ensure the warriors died of hanging and not of a mob attack. Cheers went up as the men met their deaths. One young boy, who had reportedly lost his parents in the war, was heard to shout, "Hurrah! Hurrah!"

The Dakota War—also known as the Sioux Uprising of 1862, and Little Crow's War—undoubtedly saw atrocities on both sides. But historian Lyle W. Miller Sr. of South Dakota's [Crow Creek Sioux Tribe](#) [3], an interpreter at the nearby [Mitchell Prehistoric Indian Village](#) [4], said: "When I think about that time in 1862, and I think about the reasons why it started—it had to happen... There's no good about a war, but sometimes it has to happen. The little ones were starving. What do you do when you're faced with a position like that?"

By 1862, the Dakota had surrendered most of their lands in southwest Minnesota in a pair of 1851 treaties, and still settlers were encroaching. Chief [Little Crow](#) [5] travelled to Washington DC in 1858 to protest this—to no avail. The Dakota were confined to two diminished reservations: the Upper Sioux Agency, with headquarters in Granite Falls; and the Lower Sioux Agency, based in Redwood.

They now had insufficient lands to survive by hunting, fishing and gathering wild rice. And then—with the Civil War raging—the US government failed to deliver promised food and supplies in compensation for lost lands.

Andrew Myrick, a trader who had a local warehouse packed with grain and other food intended for treaty payments, refused to extend it to the Dakota on credit—leading to an angry confrontation at the warehouse on Aug. 15, 1862. Myrick reportedly told Indian Agent Thomas Galbraith [6] in the exchange: "So far as I am concerned, if they are hungry, let them eat grass or their own dung."

Skirmishes broke out in the following days, and many Dakota appealed to Chief Little Crow—in his 60s and weary of battle—to lead them in a war to reclaim their lands. Little Crow, who had seen the teeming cities of the East, famously answered: "Kill one, two, 10—and 10 times 10 will come to kill you." But when demands persisted, he is said to have told his warriors, using his name in his own language: "Taoyateduta is not a coward: he will die with you."

On Aug. 18, a Dakota band attacked the Redwood Agency. Among those killed was Myrick—when his body was found, his mouth and stomach were stuffed with grass.

Col. Henry Hastings Sibley [7]—who had served as Minnesota's first governor—raised a volunteer force as the Dakota attacked Fort Ridgely, as well as farms and towns. On Sept. 2, Little Crow led his warriors to victory over Sibley's troops in the Battle of Birch Coulee—the crest of the Dakotas' success. On Sept. 23, Sibley turned the Dakota back at the Battle of Wood Lake. Three days later, Sibley seized the reservations, and eventually 2,000 men, women and children were taken into custody. Some 1,000 were dead, from both sides.

Gen. John Pope [8] of the Union army wrote to Sibley:

The horrible massacres of women and children and the outrageous abuse of female prisoners, still alive, call for punishment beyond human power to inflict. There will be no peace in this region by virtue of treaties and Indian faith. It is my purpose utterly to exterminate the Sioux if I have the power to do so and even if it requires a campaign lasting the whole of next year. Destroy everything belonging to them and force them out to the plains, unless, as I suggest, you can capture them. They are to be treated as maniacs or wild beasts, and by no means as people with whom treaties or compromises can be made.

On Sept. 28, Sibley appointed a military commission to try 393 Dakota for "murder and other outrages." The trials were, historians now agree, a farce; some took as little as five minutes. The Dakota were denied counsel, and some did not understand what was being said. Lincoln was nonetheless petitioned by Minnesota's white settlers for swift executions. Chief among such voices was Minnesota's Gov. Alexander Ramsey [9]—who had declared: "The Sioux Indians of Minnesota must be exterminated or driven forever beyond the borders of the state."

Lincoln was also petitioned by a few for clemency. Episcopalian Bishop Henry "HB" Whipple [10] wrote the president:

The late fearful massacre has brought sorrow to all our hearts. To see our beautiful state desolated, our homes broken up, and our entire border stained with blood, is a calamity which may well appall us. No wonder that deep indignation has been aroused and that our people cry vengeance. But if that vengeance is to be more than a savage thirst for blood, we must examine the causes which have brought this bloodshed, that our condemnation may fall on the guilty. No outbursts of passion, no temporary expediency, no deed of revenge can excuse us from the stern duties which such days of sorrow thrust upon us.

Whipple traveled to Washington to lobby Lincoln for pardons. On Dec. 6, Lincoln hand-wrote a letter to Gov. Ramsey, listing 39 men who should be hanged—37 for killing civilians, and two for rape. Ramsey was outraged and told Lincoln that the reduced sentences would cost him votes in the 1864 election. "I could not afford to hang men for votes," Lincoln reportedly said.


Dakota Historian Miller said of Lincoln, speaking to the Daily Republic of Mitchell, SD: "He freed slaves, but in the end he hung my people. It was a hard decision for him to make, no doubt."

In the aftermath, some 1,600 Dakota and "half-breeds" were rounded up and marched to Fort Snelling, where they were imprisoned for the winter of 1862-63. Wilfred Keeble, an organizer of the memorial ride and former Crow Creek tribal chairman, refers to Fort Snelling as a "concentration camp." Up to 300 died there over the winter. In the spring, the survivors were deported west, beyond Minnesota's borders. Many ended up at Crow Creek, in contemporary South Dakota, to be interned again at Fort Thmpson. Where once 6,000 Dakota had called southwest Minnesota home, only a few dozen remained.

Little Crow, who had escaped to Canada, returned in 1863 with his son Wowinapa. They were killed by settler vigilantes while picking berries near Hutchinson, Minn., on July 3 of that year, the chief's body mutilated before being turned over to authorities for a bounty. In 1879, the Minnesota Historical Society placed Little Crow's remains on display at the state capitol building, where they remained until 1915. It wasn't until 1971 that they were turned over to family members for burial near Flandreau, South Dakota.

The bodies of the 38 hanged in Mankato were also desecrated. Buried in a shallow mass grave, they were shortly exhumed—and doctors took what they wished for anatomy lessons. Dr. William "WW" Mayo [11]—whose family founded the famed Mayo Clinic [12]—dissected the body of one warrior known as Cut Nose in front of other medical personnel in nearby Le Sueur. He kept the skeleton for future instruction. (MPR News [13], Daily Republic [14], Mitchell, SD, Dec. 22; US-Dakota War of 1862 [15] website)

The Dakota are today mostly on the Crow Creek and Flandreau Santee Sioux [16] reservations in South Dakota, and the Santee Souix [17] reservation in Nebraska. The United Native America [18] website has a petition recalling the Mankato hangings, stating: "We demand that Abe Lincoln's dishonest and shameful face be removed from the 'occupied' and desecrated area called 'Mount Rushmore' immediately."

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- [10] http://discovery.mnhs.org/MN150/index.php?title=Henry_B._Whipple
- [11] <http://www.mayoclinic.org/tradition-heritage-artifacts/41-1.html>
- [12] <http://www.mayoclinic.org>
- [13] <http://minnesota.publicradio.org/display/web/2012/12/26/social-issue/dakota-war-commemoration/>
- [14] <http://www.mitchellrepublic.com/event/article/id/73942/>
- [15] <http://www.usdakotawar.org/history/aftermath>
- [16] <http://www.fsst.org/>
- [17] http://www.santeedakota.org/santee_sioux_tribe_of_nebraska.htm
- [18] <http://www.unitednativeamerica.com/hanging.html>

RARE COLORED LITHOGRAPH

79. (MANKATO EXECUTION). Colored Lithograph. Execution of the 38 Sioux Indians at Mankato, Minn., Dec. 26, 1862. 17 x 21", Milwaukee Lith. & Engr. Co., 1883.

250.00

A fine example of local color lithography, commemorating a notable moment in Minnesota History. The Indians are on a Multiple gallows-hill, with soldiers lined up on all sides, & around them a host of spectators, some with farm wagons; town buildings in the rear.



EXECUTION OF THE THIRTY-EIGHT SIOUX INDIANS

AT MANKATO, MINNESOTA, DECEMBER 26, 1862.

ITEM 79

Bruce Gimelson, Autographs

FORT WASHINGTON INDUSTRIAL PARK

FORT WASHINGTON, PENNSYLVANIA 19034

LINCOLN HESITATES TO EXECUTE THREE HUNDRED SIOUX INDIANS IN MINNESOTA

1255. LINCOLN, ABRAHAM. ALS, 1p, 8vo, Executive Mansion, Washington, December 1, 1862.
To the Judge Advocate General (Joseph Holt.)

General John Pope had telegraphed Lincoln on November 7 advising him that a military commission had sentenced three hundred indians of the Sioux nation to death in Minnesota. These indians had ravaged and burned much of the area around St. Paul and it was General Pope's desire to have them executed as quickly as possible. Several telegrams passed between Lincoln and Pope with Lincoln trying to find out more about the guilty parties and Pope still pressing for immediate and total execution.

In this letter of Dec. 1, 1862, Lincoln writes to Joseph Holt, the Judge advocate general: "Sir Three hundred Indians have been sentenced to death in Minnesota by a Military Commission, and execution only awaits my action. I wish your legal opinion whether if I should conclude to execute only a part of them, I must myself designate which, or could I leave the designation to some officer on the ground? Yours very truly
A. LINCOLN."

Lincoln up to the time of this letter had not yet received sufficient evidence to warrant the execution of so many human beings but neither had he found out who were the most to blame

among the indians. We know the matter was weighing heavily on him, even in that time of civil war which was dividing the country. On the very day Lincoln wrote this letter to Holt he delivered his annual message to Congress. The bulk of this Message dealt with the problems of War, slavery, and finance. But he had inserted in the middle a brief description of the Indian uprisings in Minnesota and the desire of the people to have the indians removed beyond the borders of the State. He hinted that there was corruption in the Bureau of Indian Affairs and suggested to the Congress that the Indian system be remodelled.

Judge Holt replied to Lincoln that there was no way he could delegate authority to a soldier on the field and that it would have to be his decision alone as to how many of the Indians be put to death. Lincoln then carefully sifted all information he received from that distant outpost and on December 6th, 1862 he ordered that only forty of the three hundred be executed. One of these who turned out to be a Negro, had his sentence reduced to ten years' imprisonment for certain information he supplied.

On December 11, Lincoln delivered a special letter to the Senate which had requested a detailed account of the Indian Massacres and his actions in the case. We finally see Lincoln's reasons for acting as he did: "To the Senate of the United States: . . . Anxious to not act with so much clemency as to encourage another outbreak on the one hand, nor with so much severity as to be real cruelty on the other, I caused a careful examination of the records of the trials to be made, in view of first ordering the execution of such as had been proved guilty of violating females. Contrary to my expectations only two of this class were found. I then directed a further examination, and a classification of all who were proven to have participated in massacres, as distinguished from battles. This class numbered forty, and included the two convicted of female violation . . . I have ordered the other thirty-nine to be executed on Friday, the 19th inst . . ."

The broad significance of this letter is that it shows the deep feeling Lincoln had for human life. And although he was placed in a position where he could have easily snuffed out three hundred lives with the stroke of his pen, he carefully analyzed the situation and meted out punishment where it was deserved.

Physically, the letter is in prime condition. It was purchased from the descendents of Holt and is one of the finest Lincoln letters we have handled.

\$6,000

Executive Mansion,

Washington, Dec. 1

1862

Judge Adams Jones

Sir:

Three hundred dollars
have been sent me to settle in the
note by a Justice, & no more, and
execution my agent, my action, it
with your leg. & please to let me
I should continue to execute my
part of them, I must myself sign
which, or even I can be very
low to my office on this point,

Yours very truly

A. Lincoln

